MF文庫

好評既刊

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ジュン……全1巻
島本和彦
燃えよペン……全1巻
士郎正宗
アップルシード……全4巻
新谷かおる
エリア88……全13巻
クレオパトラD.C.……全6巻
ふたり鷹……全11巻
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パスカル・シティ……全1巻
ガッデム……全4巻
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闇に棲む音 他……全1巻
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那由他……全2巻
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山田ミネコ
アリスと3人のふたご……全1巻
最終戦争シリーズ……1〜12巻
竹宮惠子
ウェディング・ライセンス…全1巻
まほうつかいの弟子……全1巻
トゥ・リップルくん……全1巻

スパイダーマン

5

SPIDERMAN

原作 平井和正
作画 池上遼一

Kazumasa Hirai Ryoichi Ikegami

MF文庫
4-16
619

スパイダーマン 5
SPIDERMAN

原作 平井和正
作画 池上遼一

MEDIA FACTORY

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定価:本体619円(税別)
メディアファクトリー

MEDIA FACTORY

スパイダーマン 第5巻

彼女が来てからだった、不思議な事件が続き皆がおかしくなったのは。新任の美しい女教師の周りで次々と事件が起こる。スパイダー感覚で危険を感じたユウ以外の男子生徒は彼女の虜となり、敵対する者は次々と死んでいく。彼女の正体は魔女なのか?『金色の目の魔女』。ユウの目の前で男はその身を引き裂かれ死んだ。まわりには誰も居ないのに……。次々と起こる怪死事件、彼らは皆“虎”に襲われたと言う。被害者達を結ぶ女性の悲劇をユウは知る『虎を飼う女』。劇画界の巨匠、池上遼一とSF小説の大家、平井和正のコラボレーションによる大傑作もいよいよ最終巻。巻末に執筆当時を語る池上遼一のインタビューを収録しお届けします。

池上遼一
Ikegami Ryoichi

昭和19年、福井県出身。
昭和36年日の丸文庫単行本
『魔像』にてデビュー。
昭和49年より連載の始まった『男組』
(原作:雁屋 哲)が空前の大ヒットとなり、
その後も『傷追い人』『Cryingフリーマン』
(いずれも原作:小池一夫)と
読者を魅了する作品を次々と世に送り出す。
その他の主な作品
『HEAT−灼熱−』(原作:武論 尊)
『流月抄』(オリジナル)など。

平井和正
Hirai Kazumasa

昭和13年神奈川県出身。
大学在学中の昭和36年、
『殺人地帯』で作家デビュー。
昭和38年、漫画原作を担当した『8マン』は、
アニメのシナリオも手掛け大ヒットとなる。
昭和46年に発表された『狼の紋章』から始まる
『ウルフガイシリーズ』は、もう1つの代表作
『幻魔大戦シリーズ』ともども、
今なお多くの若者に影響を与え続けている。
平成9年からは、最新作の新たなウルフガイシリーズ
『月光魔術團』などをインターネット上で販売開始。
現在も精力的な執筆活動を続ける。

装画・池上遼一
装幀・多田和博

作画 平井和正　原作 池上遼一

スパイダーマン

⑤

MEDIA FACTORY

SPIDERMAN

スパイダーマン

5

Spider-Man
Volume 5
Written By: Kazumasa Hirai
Illustrated By: Ryoichi Ikegami

スパイダーマン 5

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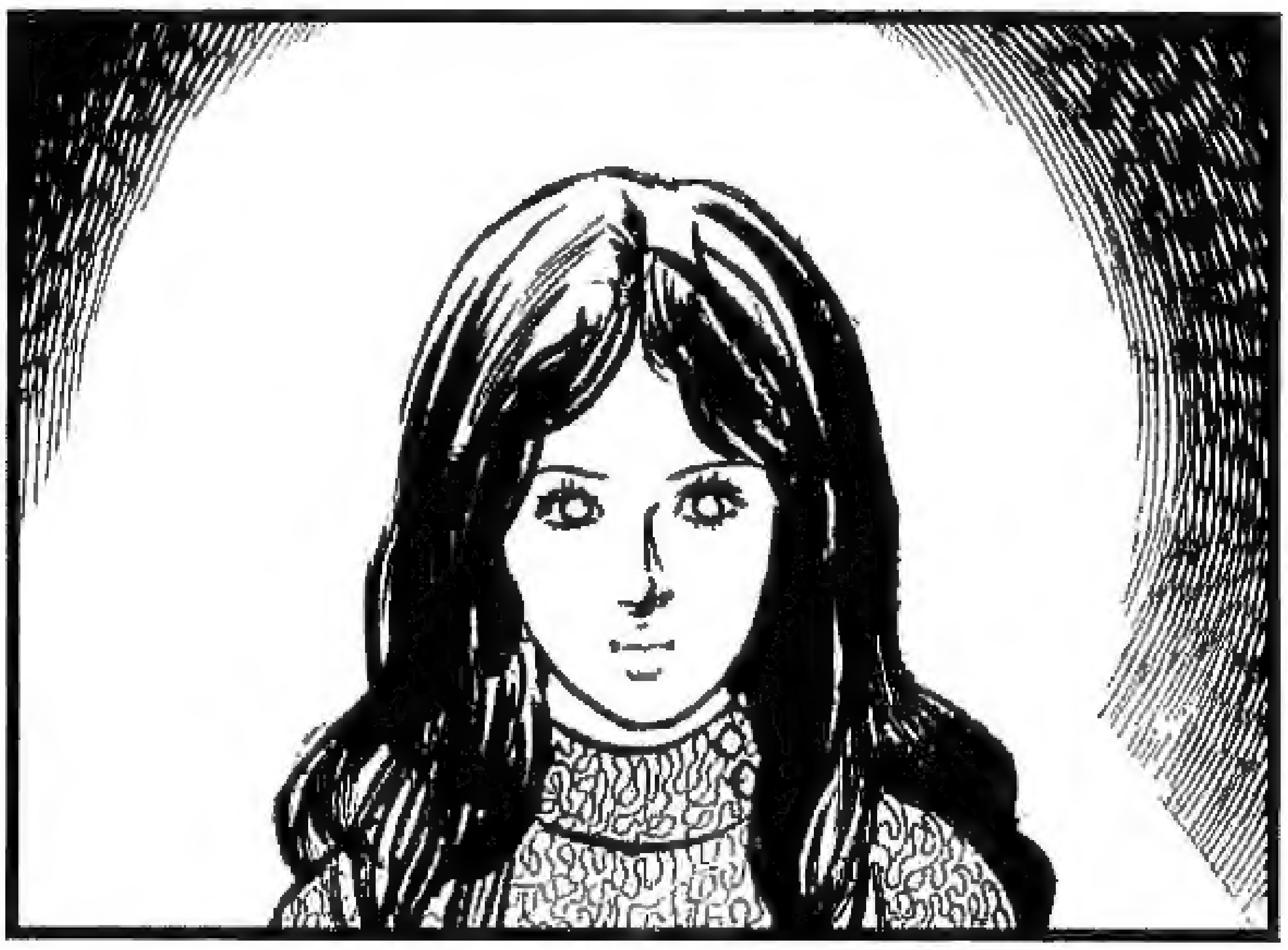
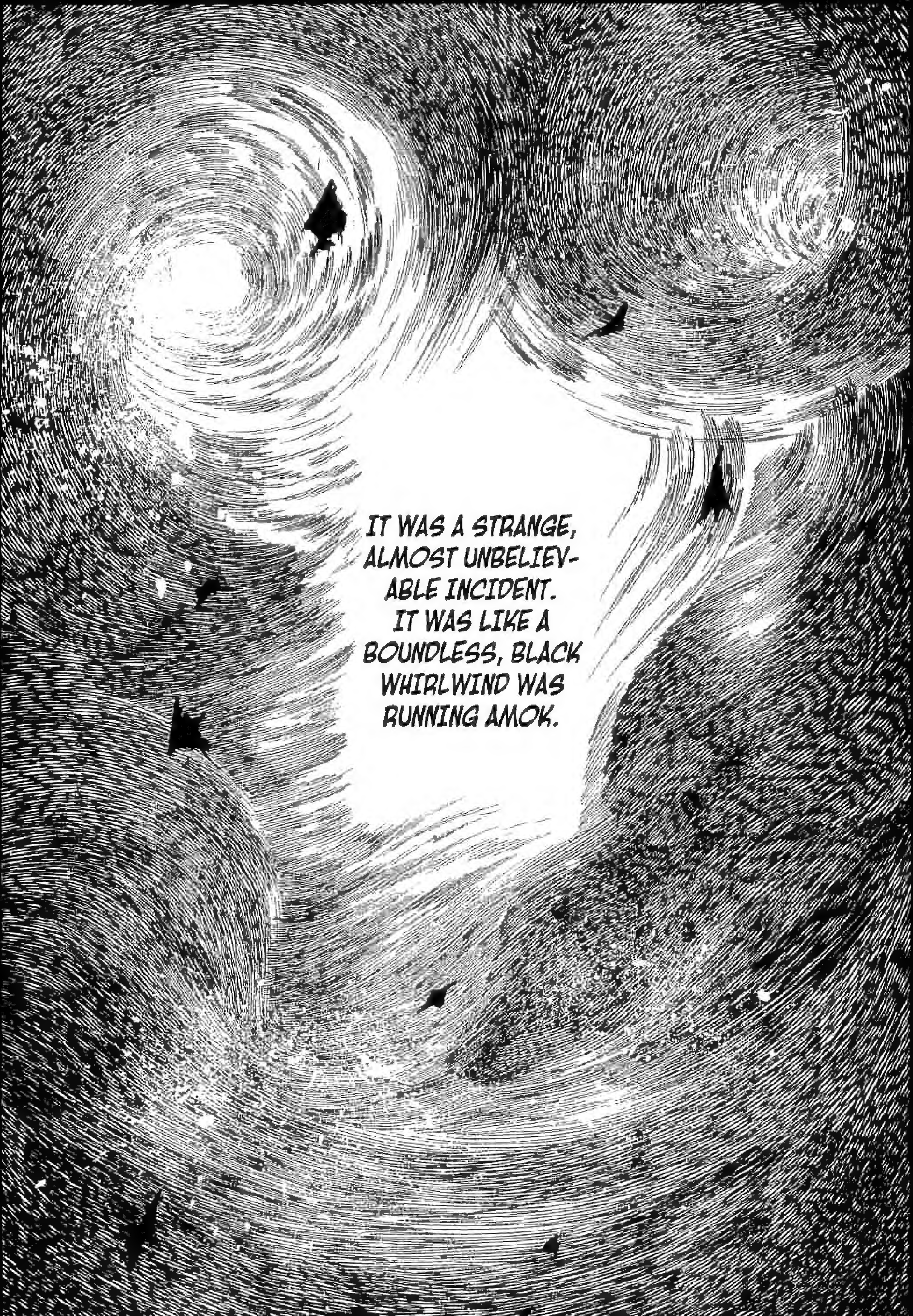
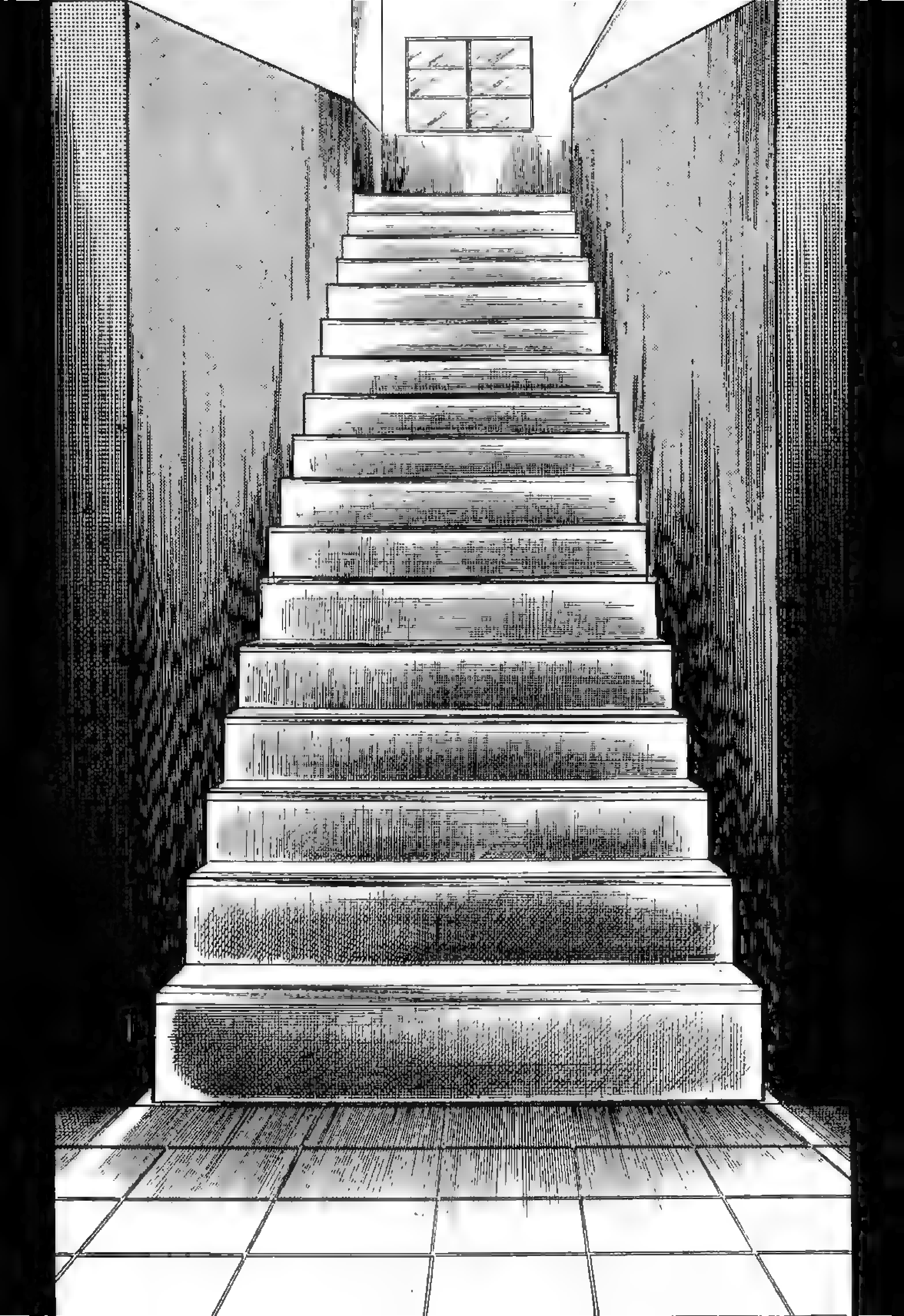
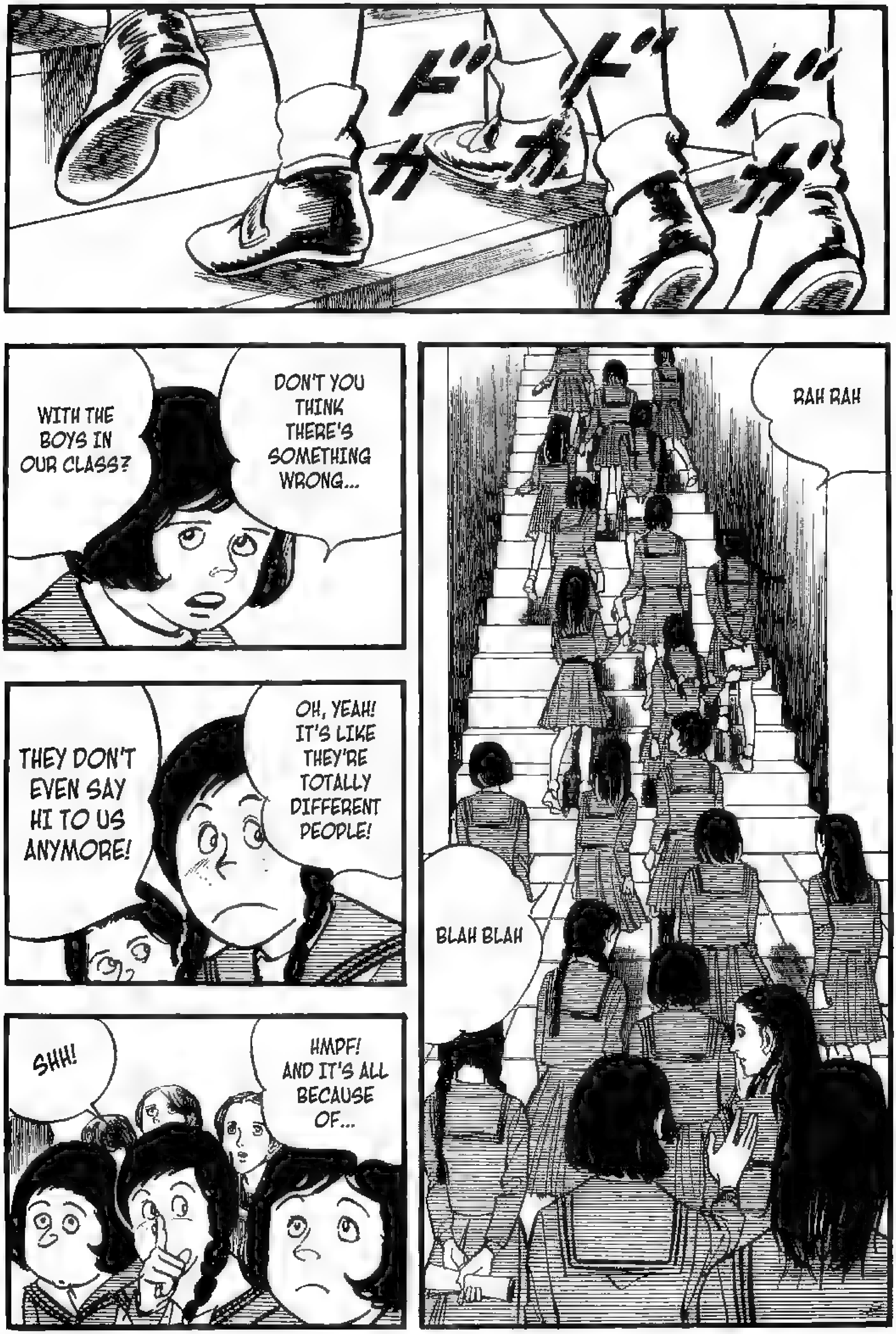
Chapter 13:
The Golden-Eyed Witch

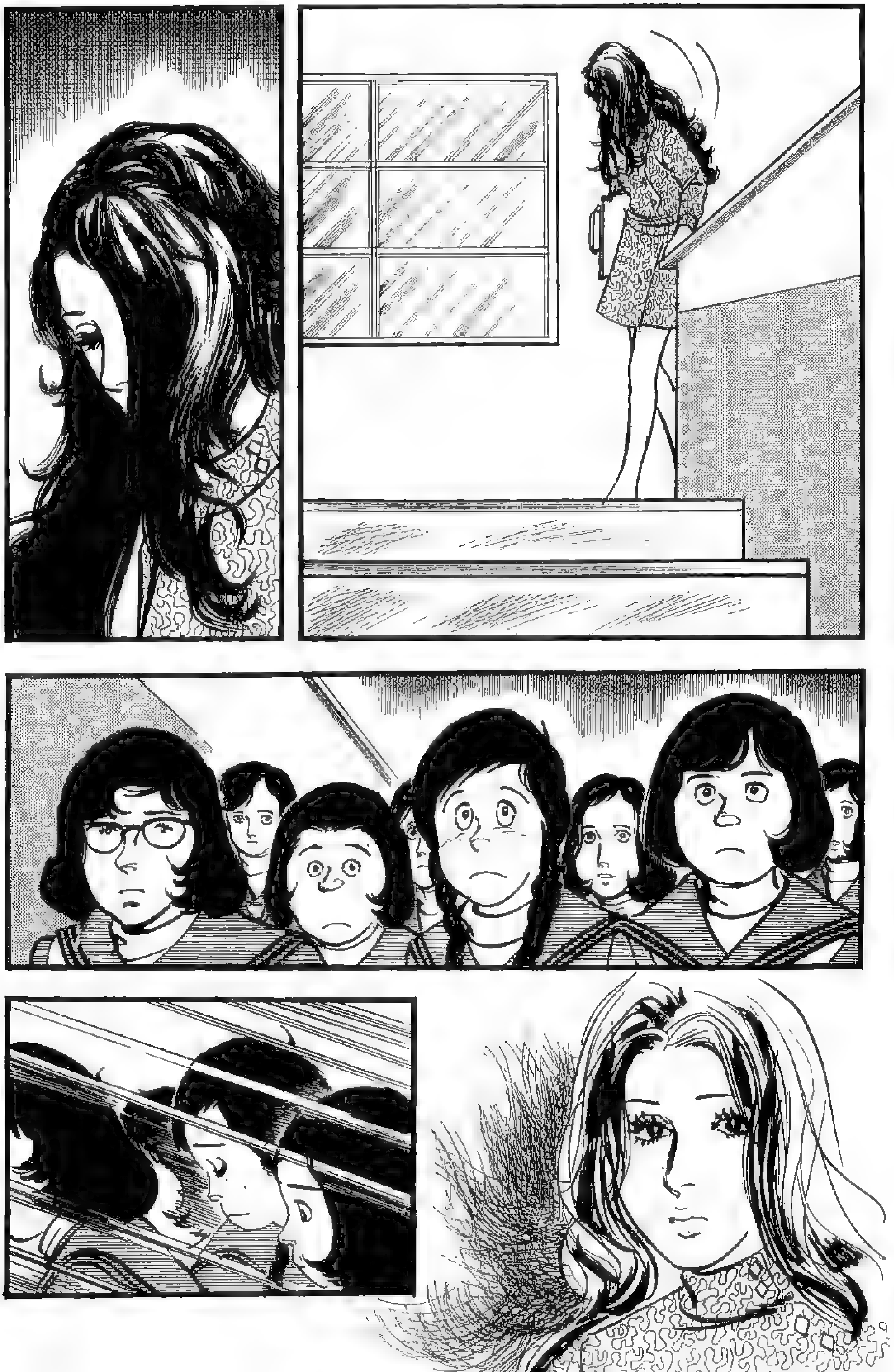


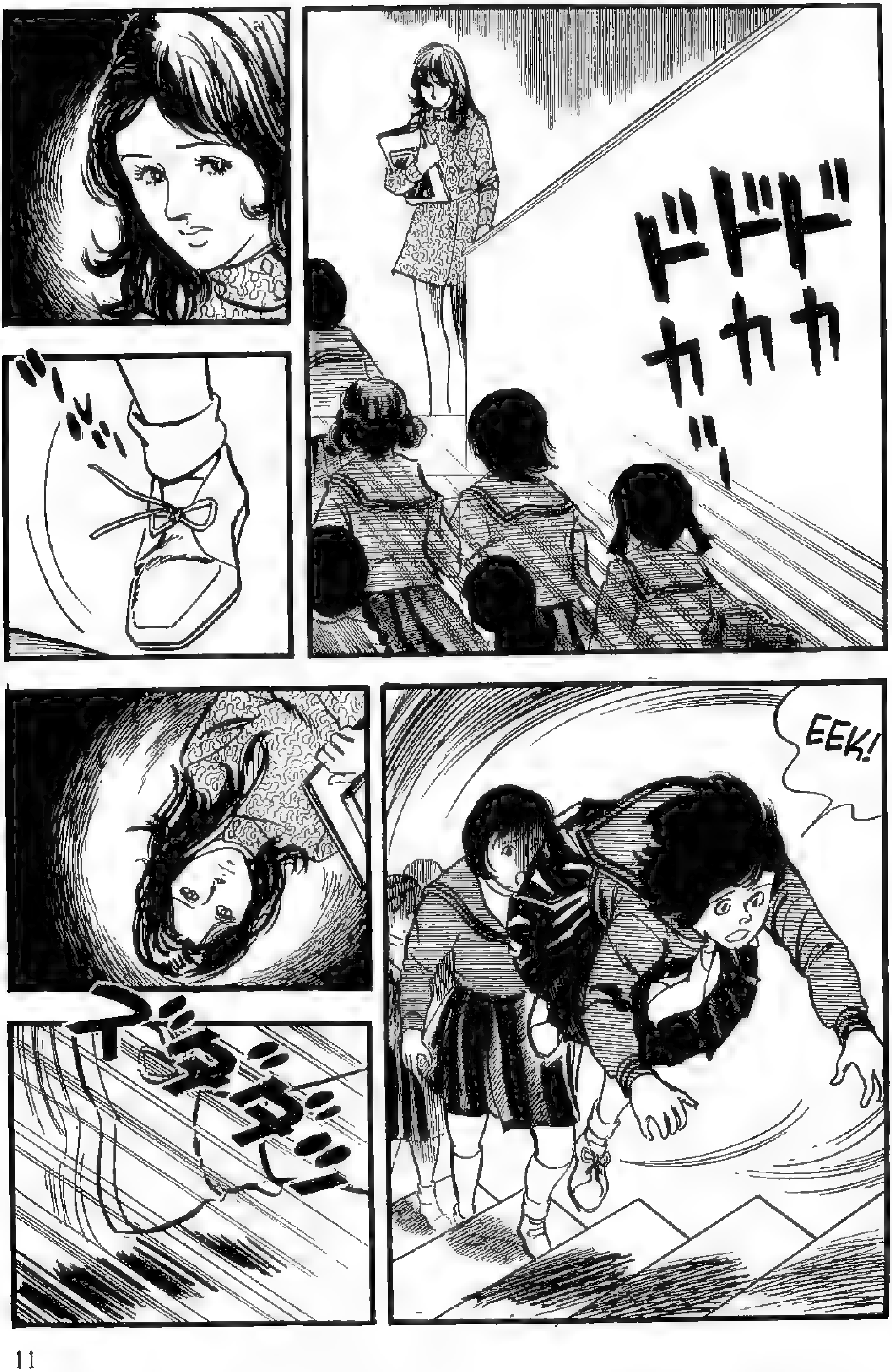

IT WAS A STRANGE, ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE INCIDENT. IT WAS LIKE A BOUNDLESS, BLACK WHIRLWIND WAS RUNNING AMOK.

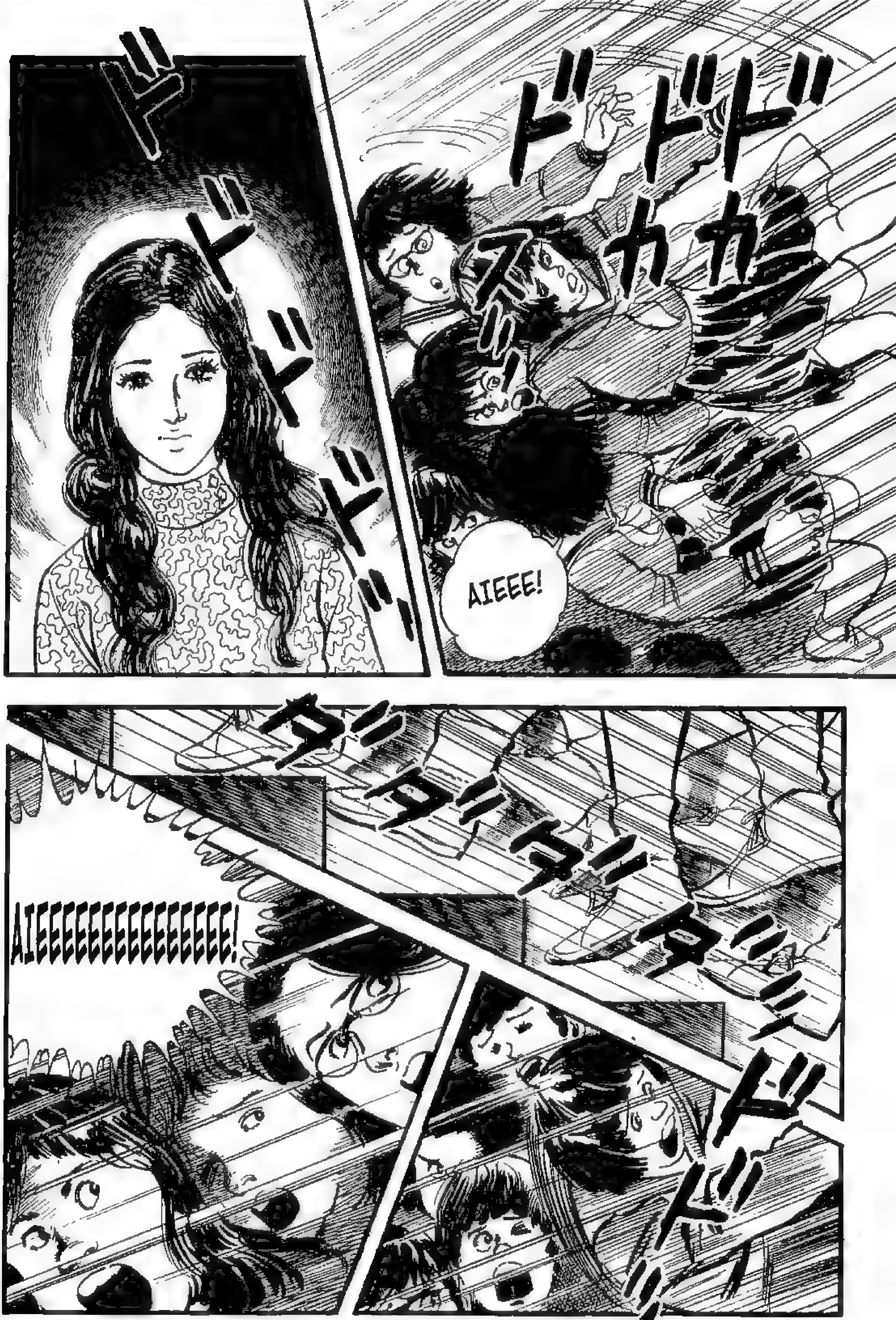
IT WAS A MADNESS THAT SUDDENLY AFFECTED GROUPS.
NO ONE COULD TELL WHAT EXACTLY HAD HAPPENED.
NOT EVEN AFTER IT WAS LONG PAST.
THE INCIDENT HAPPENED AT THE HIGH SCHOOL KOMORI YU WENT TO.

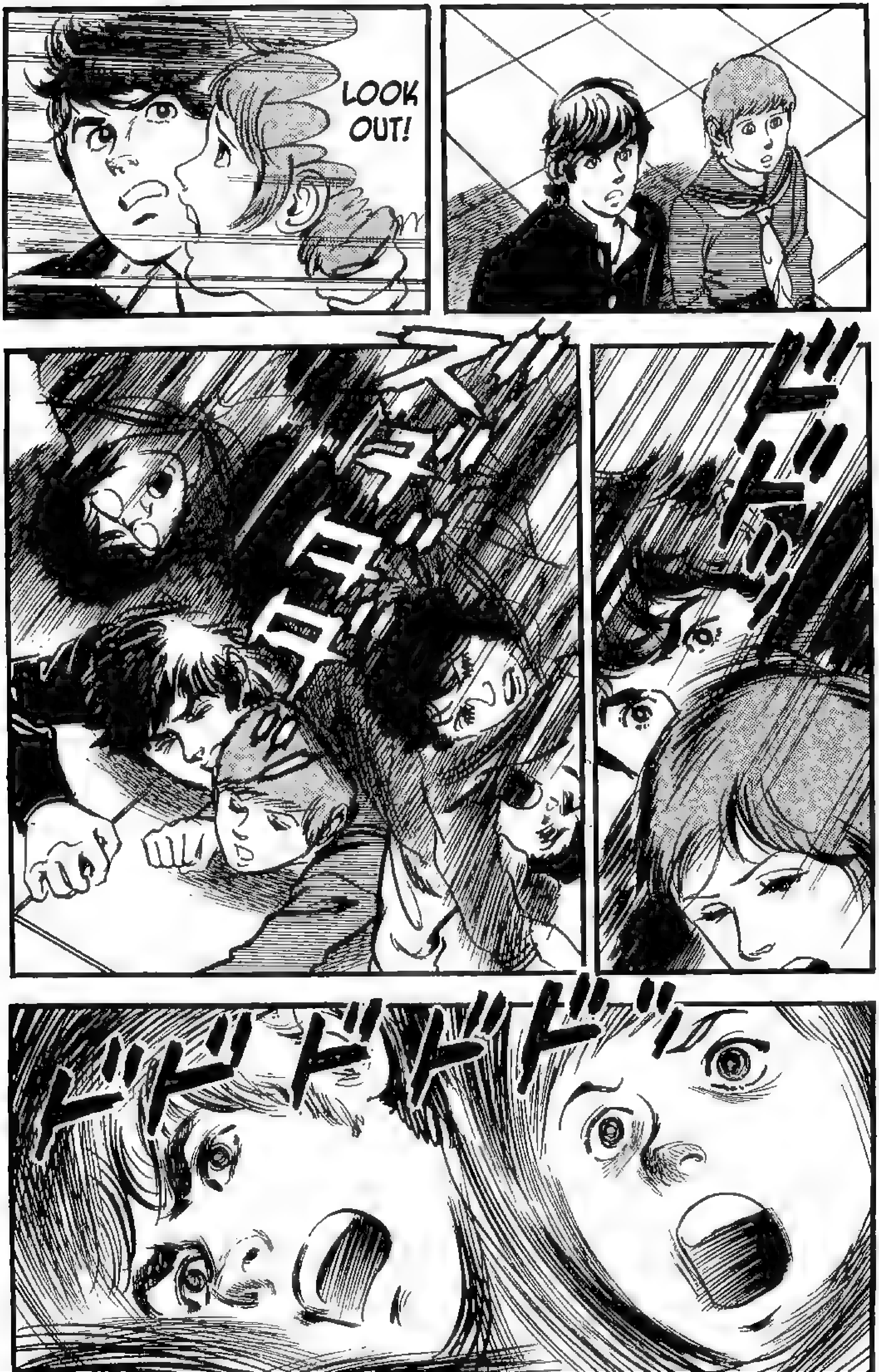



ドガ
ドガ
ドガ
RAH RAH
BLAH BLAH
DON'T YOU THINK THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG...
WITH THE BOYS IN OUR CLASS?
OH, YEAH! IT'S LIKE THEY'RE TOTALLY DIFFERENT PEOPLE!
THEY DON'T EVEN SAY HI TO US ANYMORE!
HMPF! AND IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF...
SHH!

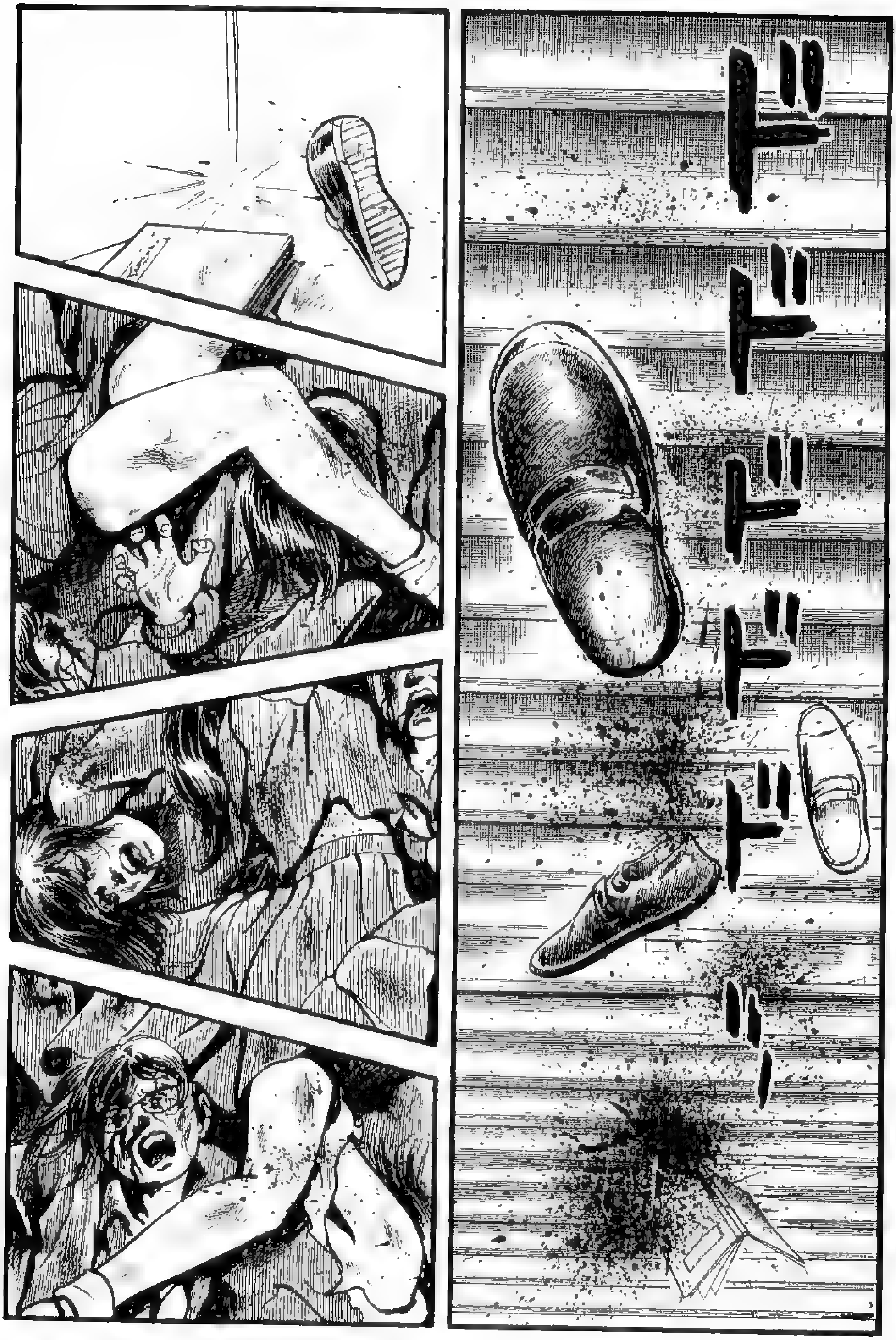


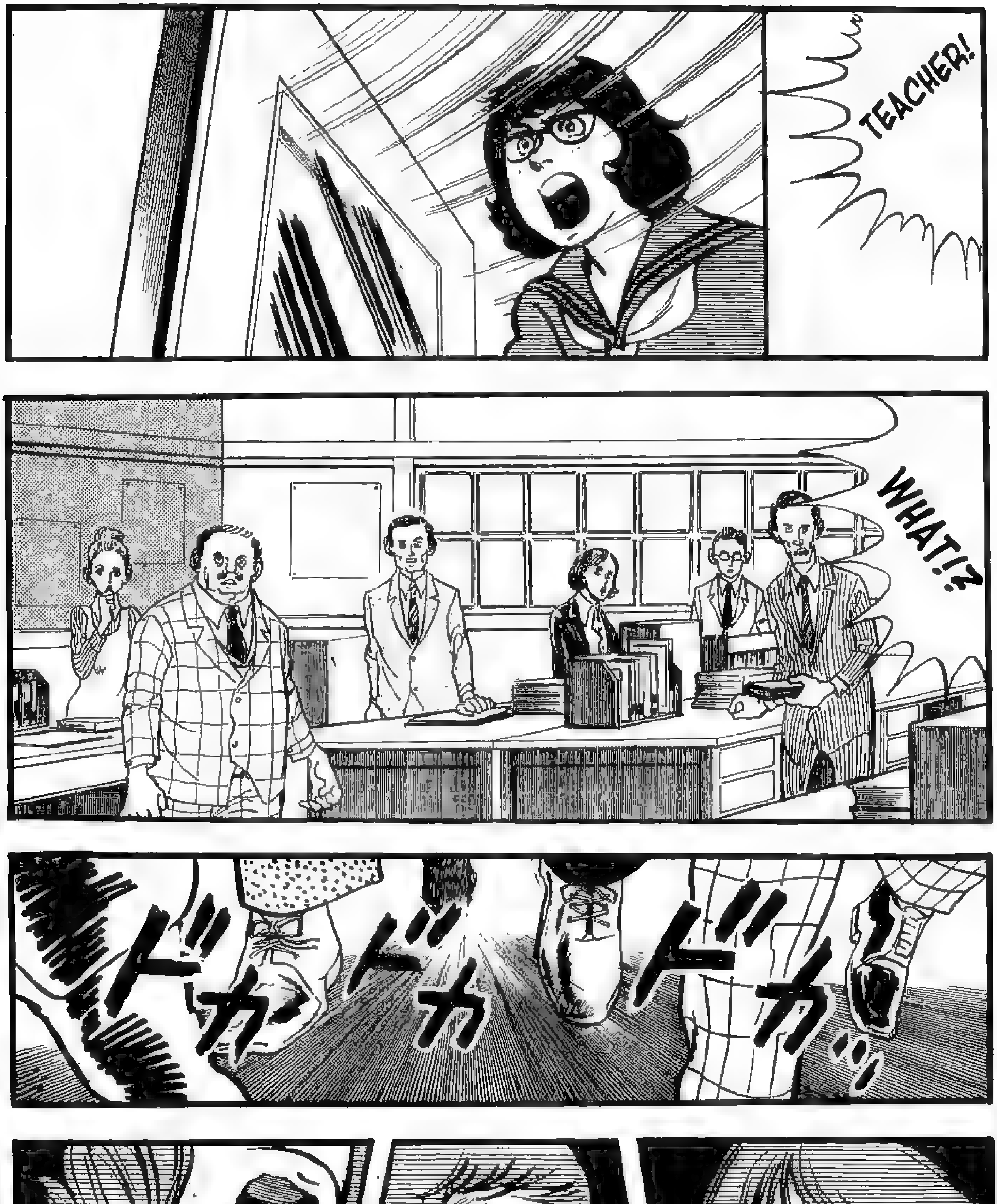

ドカドカドカガッ
ズルッ
EEK!
ズダダーン

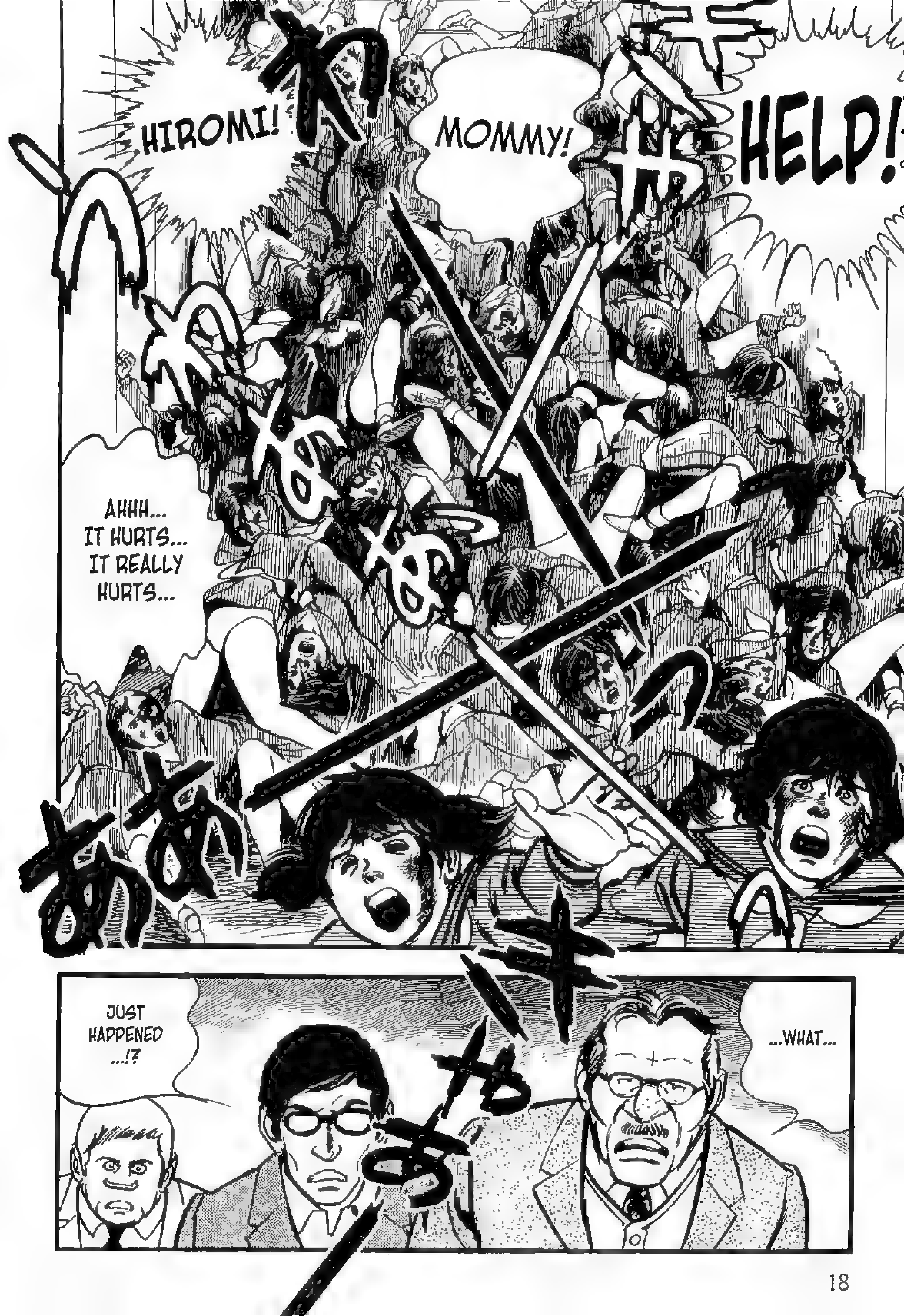

ドカ ドカ ド
AIEEE!
ドドドドド…
ダダダダダッ
AIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!
ドドド

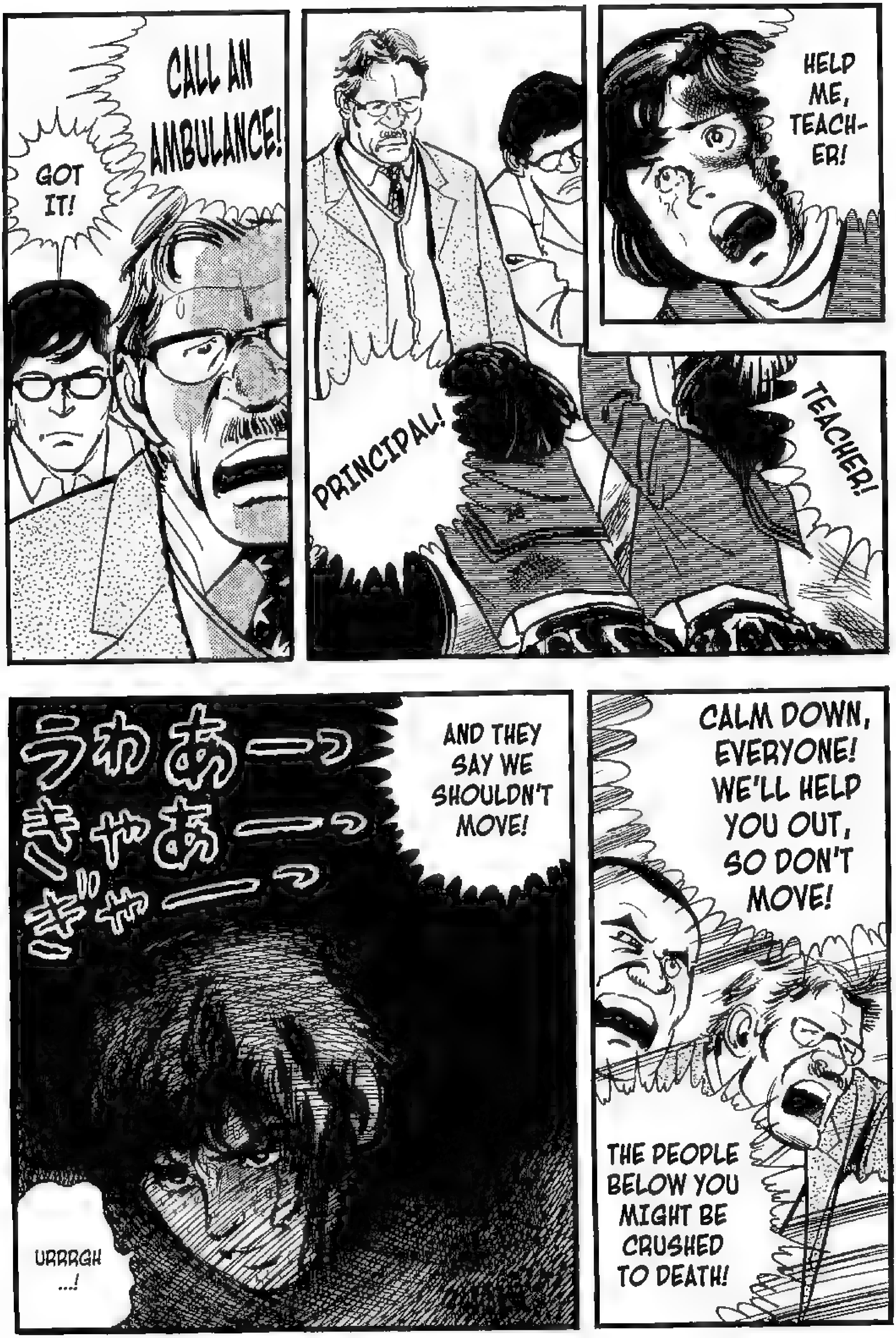

LOOK OUT!
ズデョョ
ドドッ
ドドドドドッ

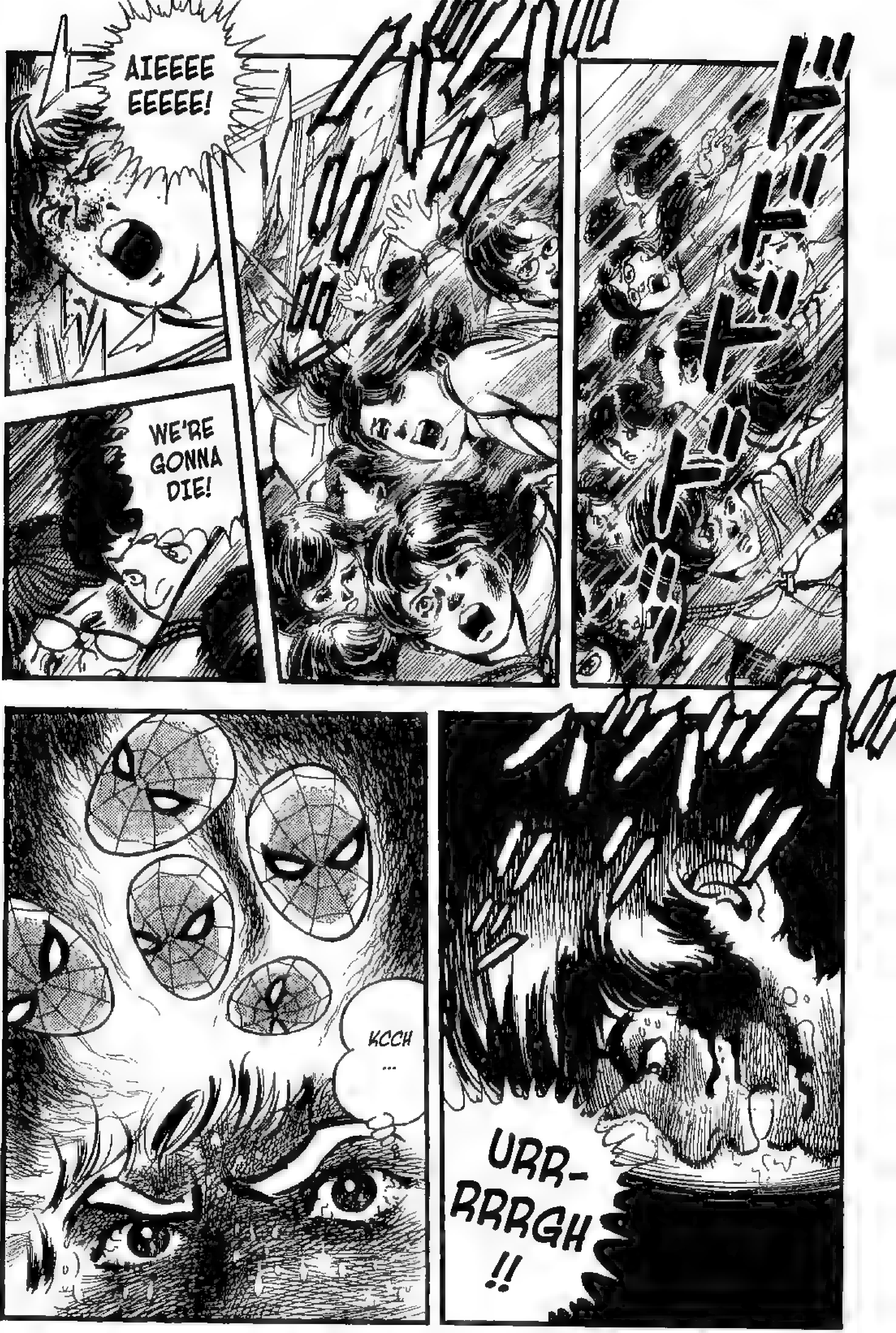
AIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!
ドドドドドドド
GYAAAAAAAAAAA!!
EEEEEEEEEEEE!!
バキッ!!
バキ
ボグッ
ビシ

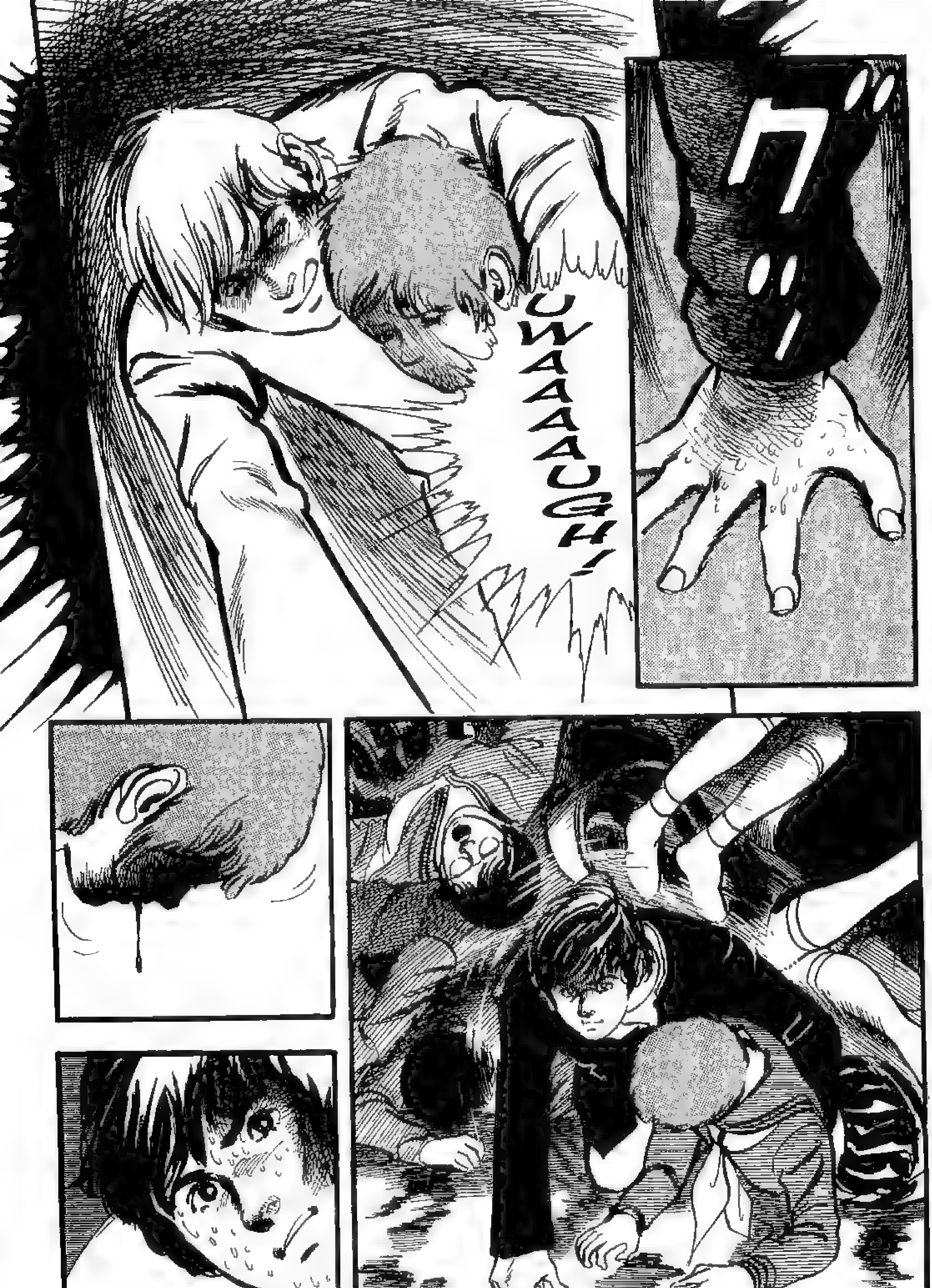

ドドドドドー

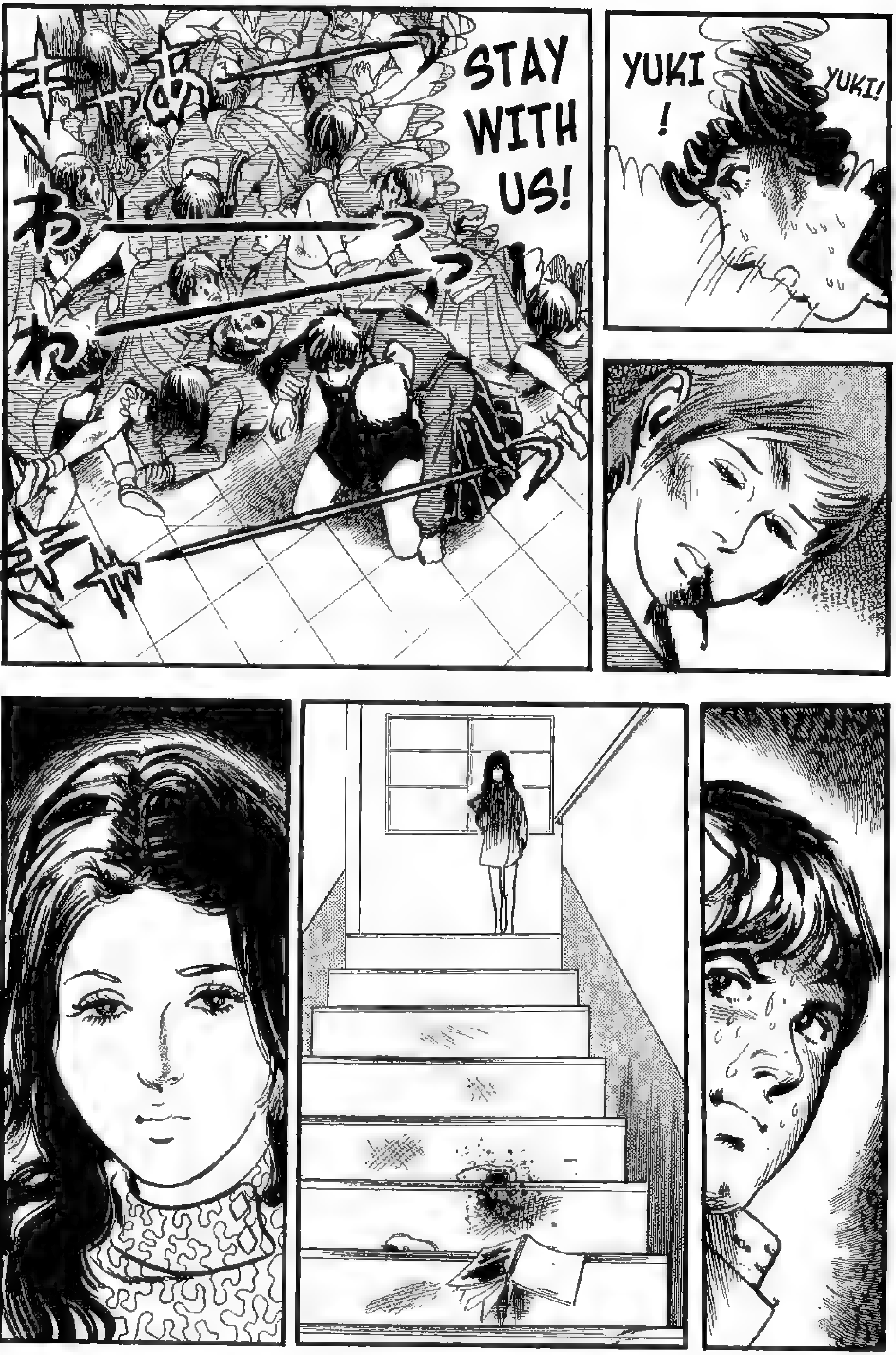

TEACHER!
WHAT!?
ドカドカドカッ

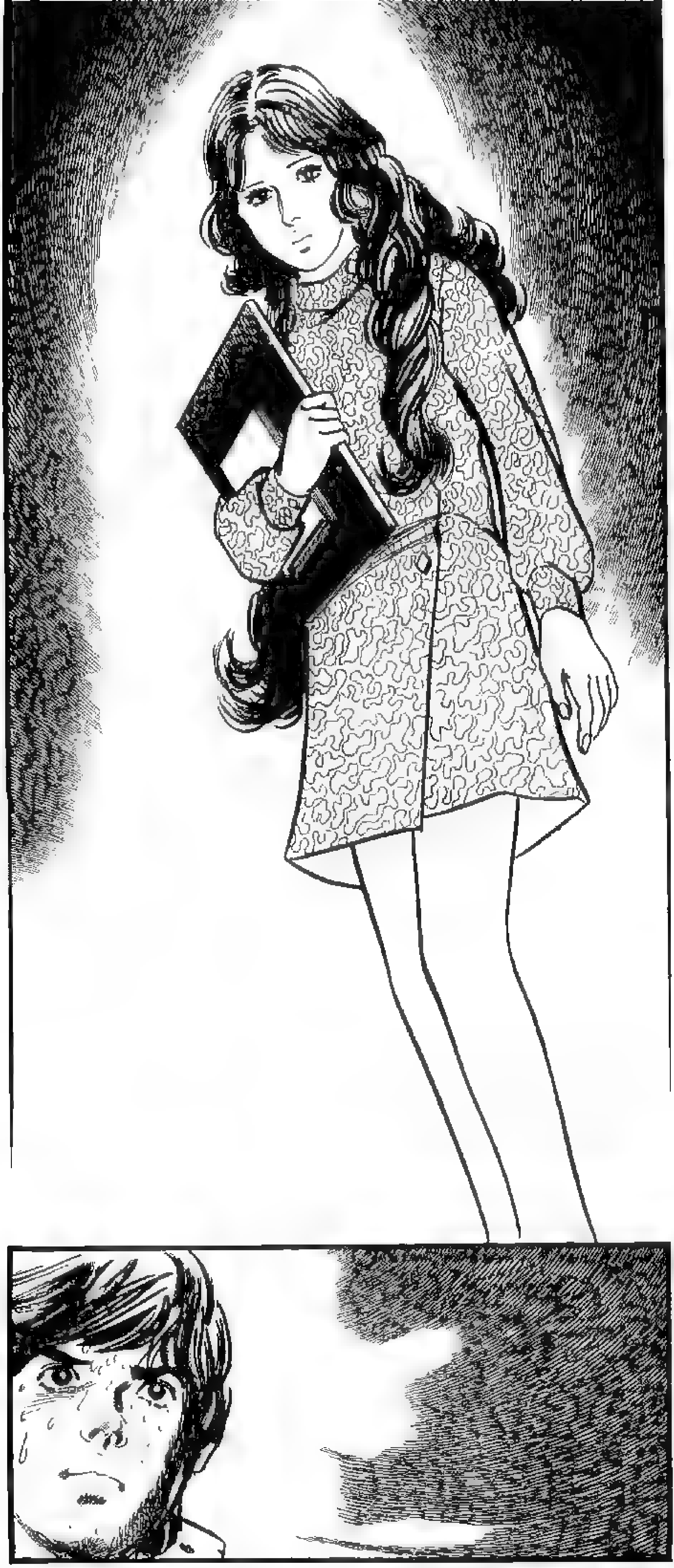

HELP!!
MOMMY!
HIROMI!
AHHH... IT HURTS... IT REALLY HURTS...
...WHAT...
JUST HAPPENED ...!?

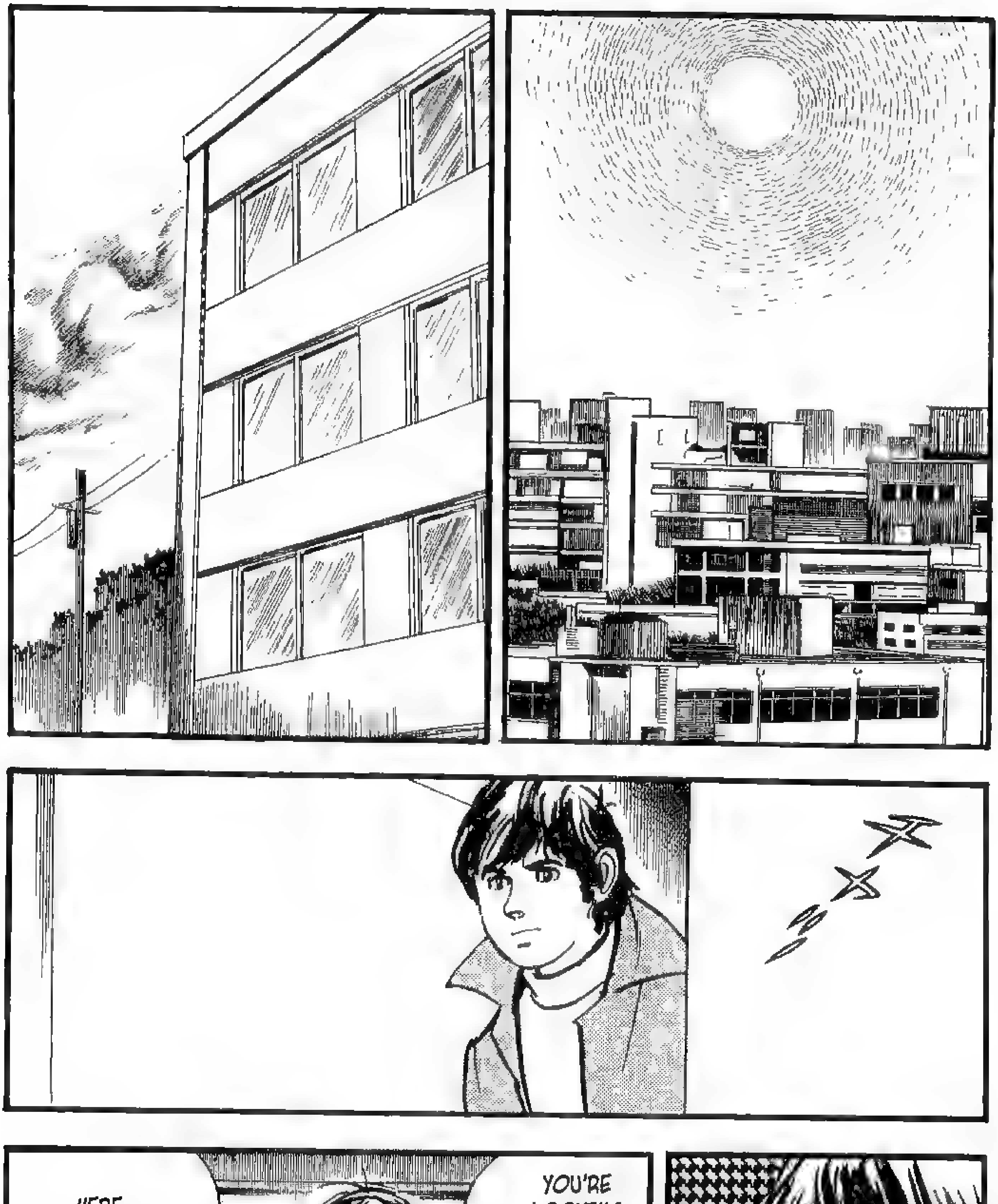

HELP ME, TEACHER!
TEACHER!
PRINCIPAL!
CALL AN AMBULANCE!
GOT IT!
CALM DOWN, EVERYONE! WE'LL HELP YOU OUT, SO DON'T MOVE!
THE PEOPLE BELOW YOU MIGHT BE CRUSHED TO DEATH!
AND THEY SAY WE SHOULDN'T MOVE!
うわあーーっ
きゃあーーっ
ぎゃーーっ
URRRGH ...!


AIEEEEEEEEEE!
WE'RE GONNA DIE!
KCCH ...
URR-RRRGH !!

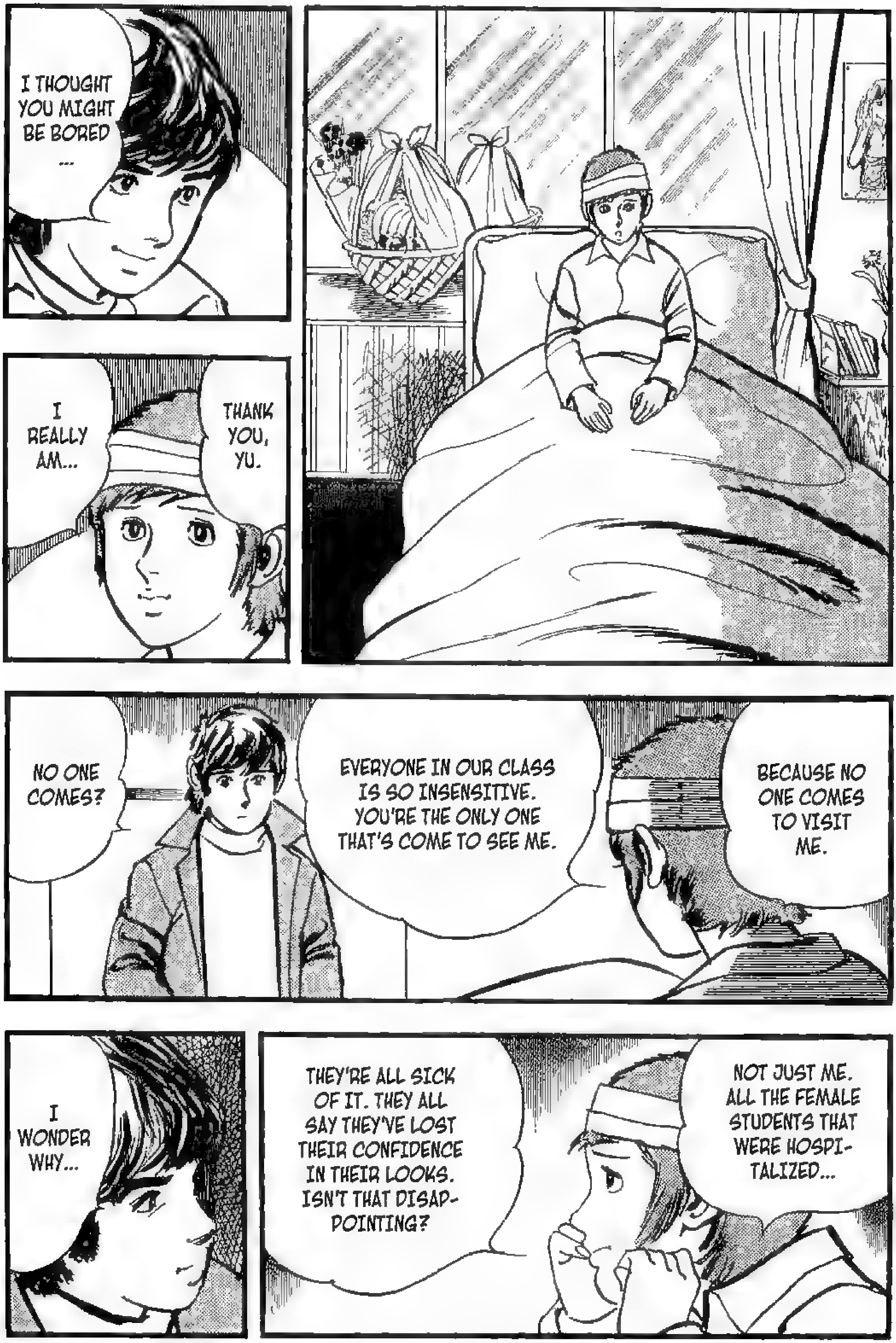

ガッ!
UWAAAAAUGH!

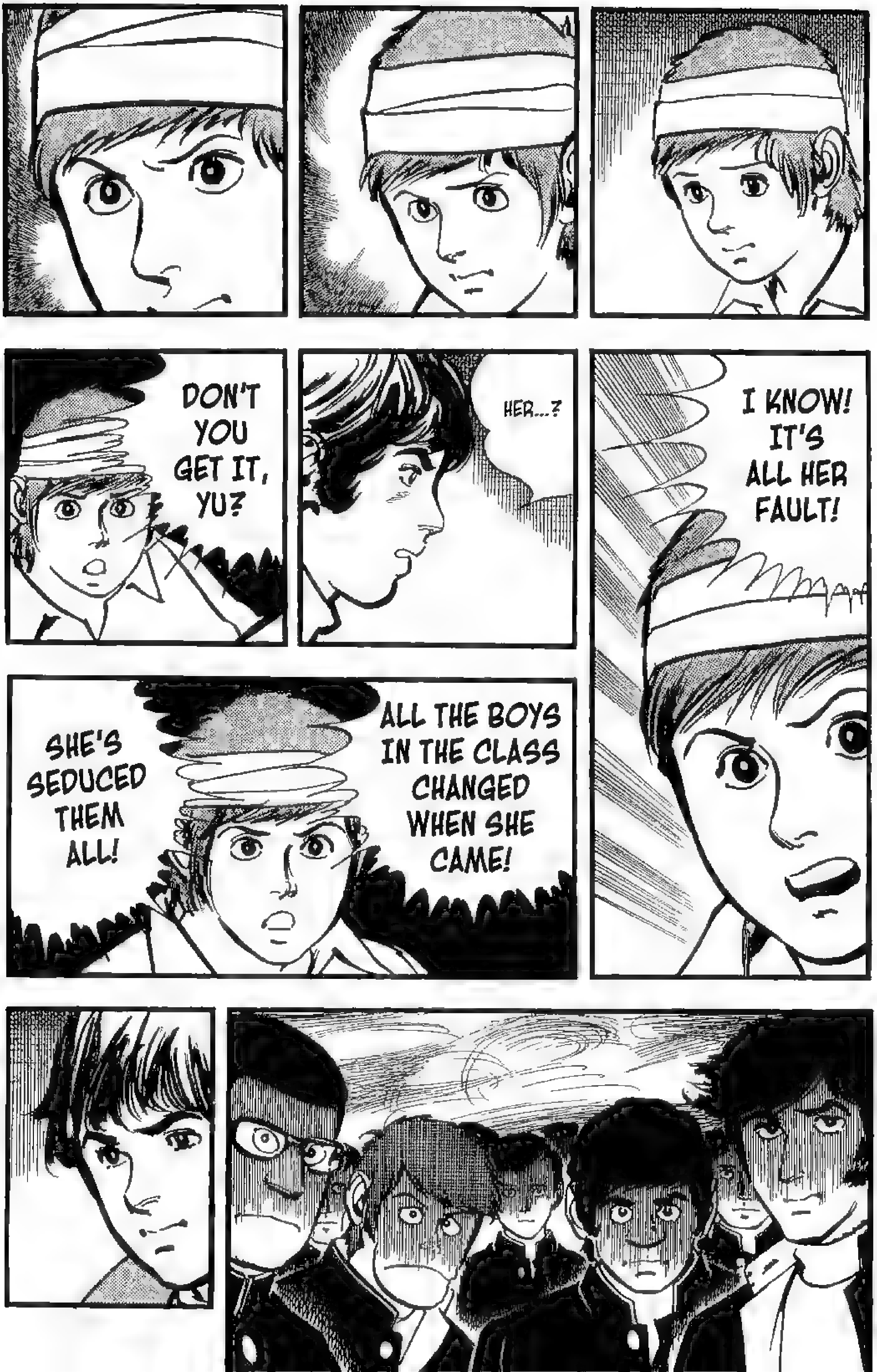

STAY WITH US!
YUKI!
YUKI!
わっ
わっ

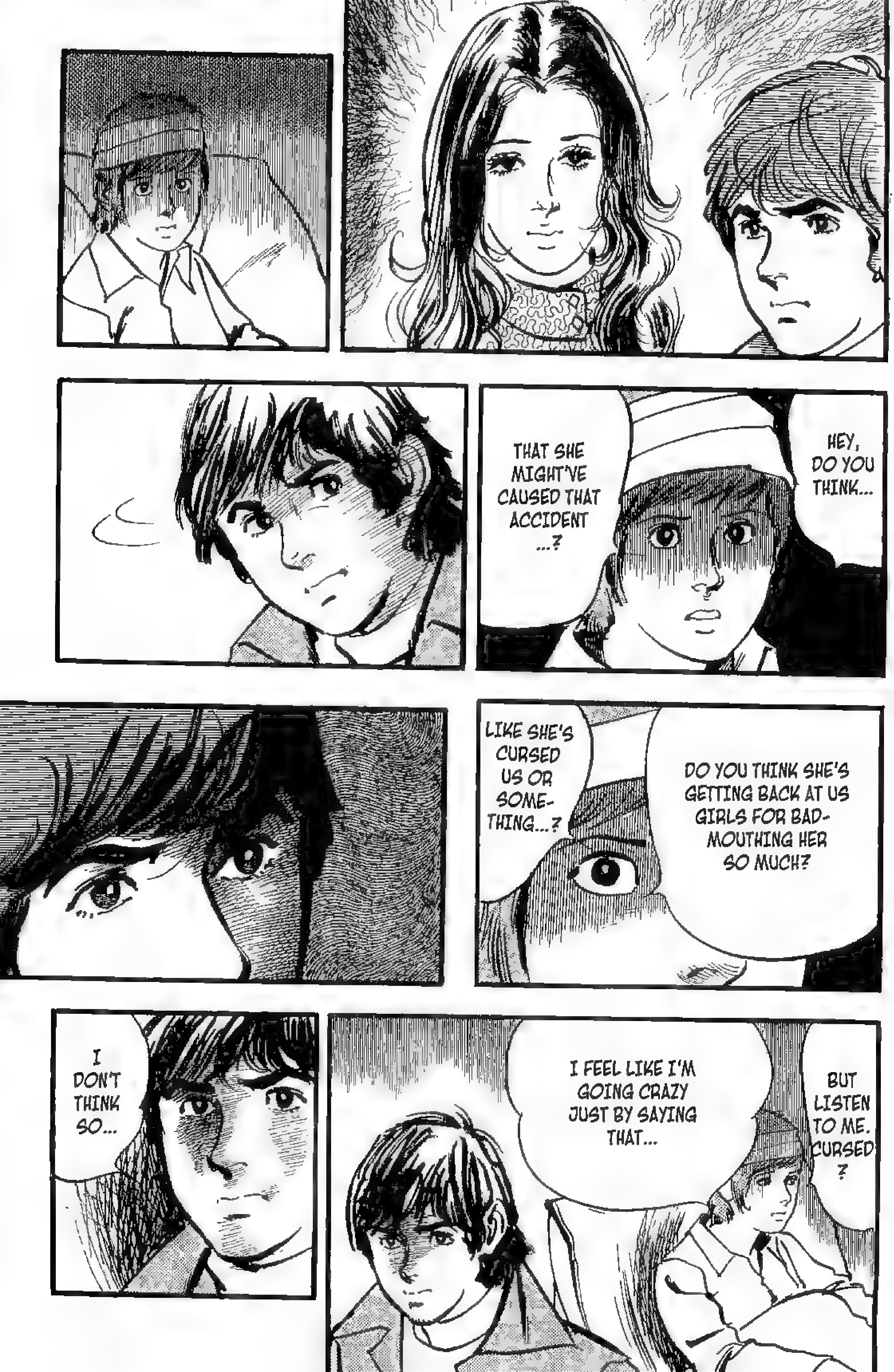


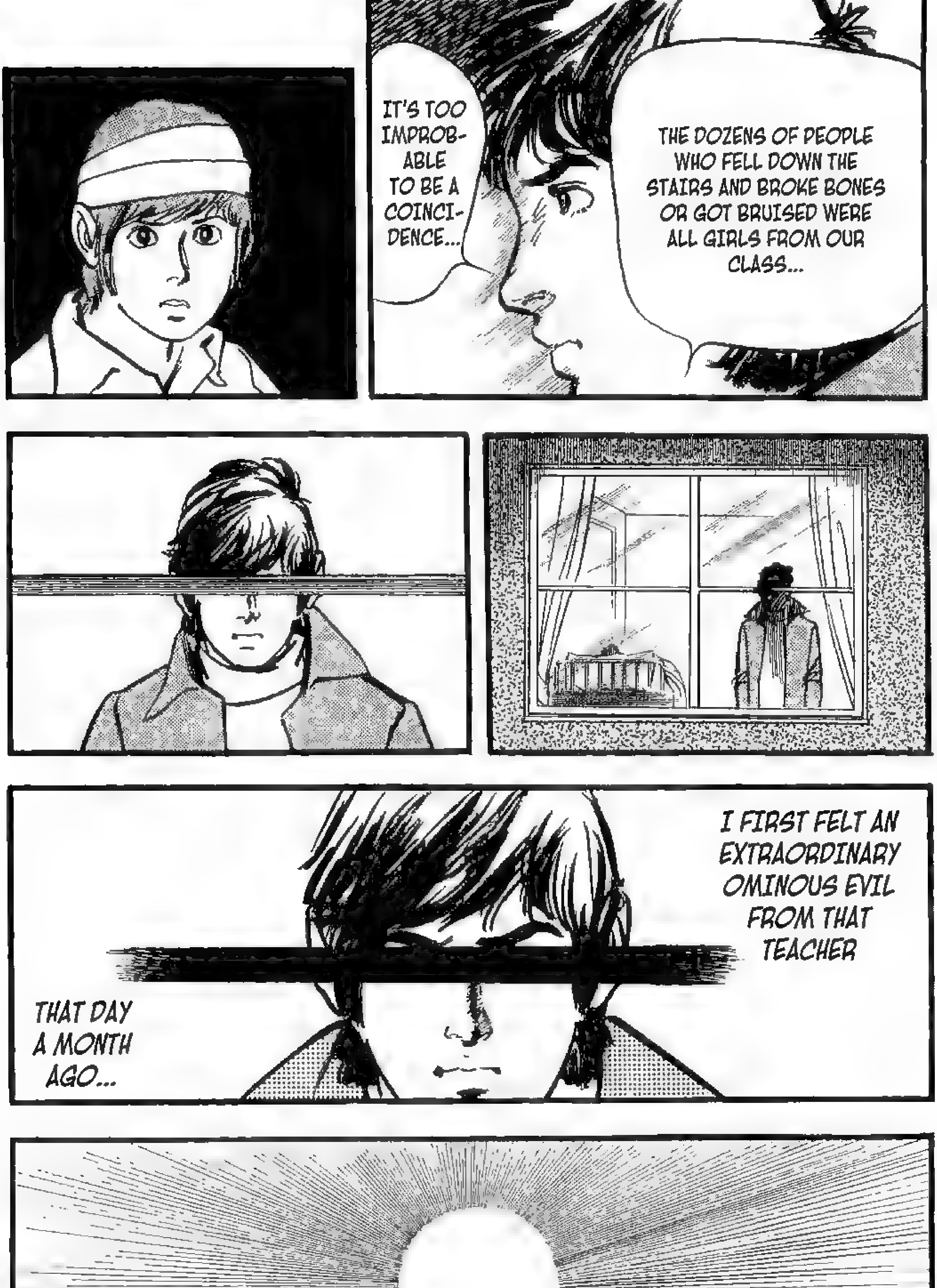

ズズッ
YOU'RE LOOKING PRETTY GREAT FOR SOMEONE WHO BROKE HER RIBS.
HERE. I BOUGHT YOU A SHONEN MAGAZINE.

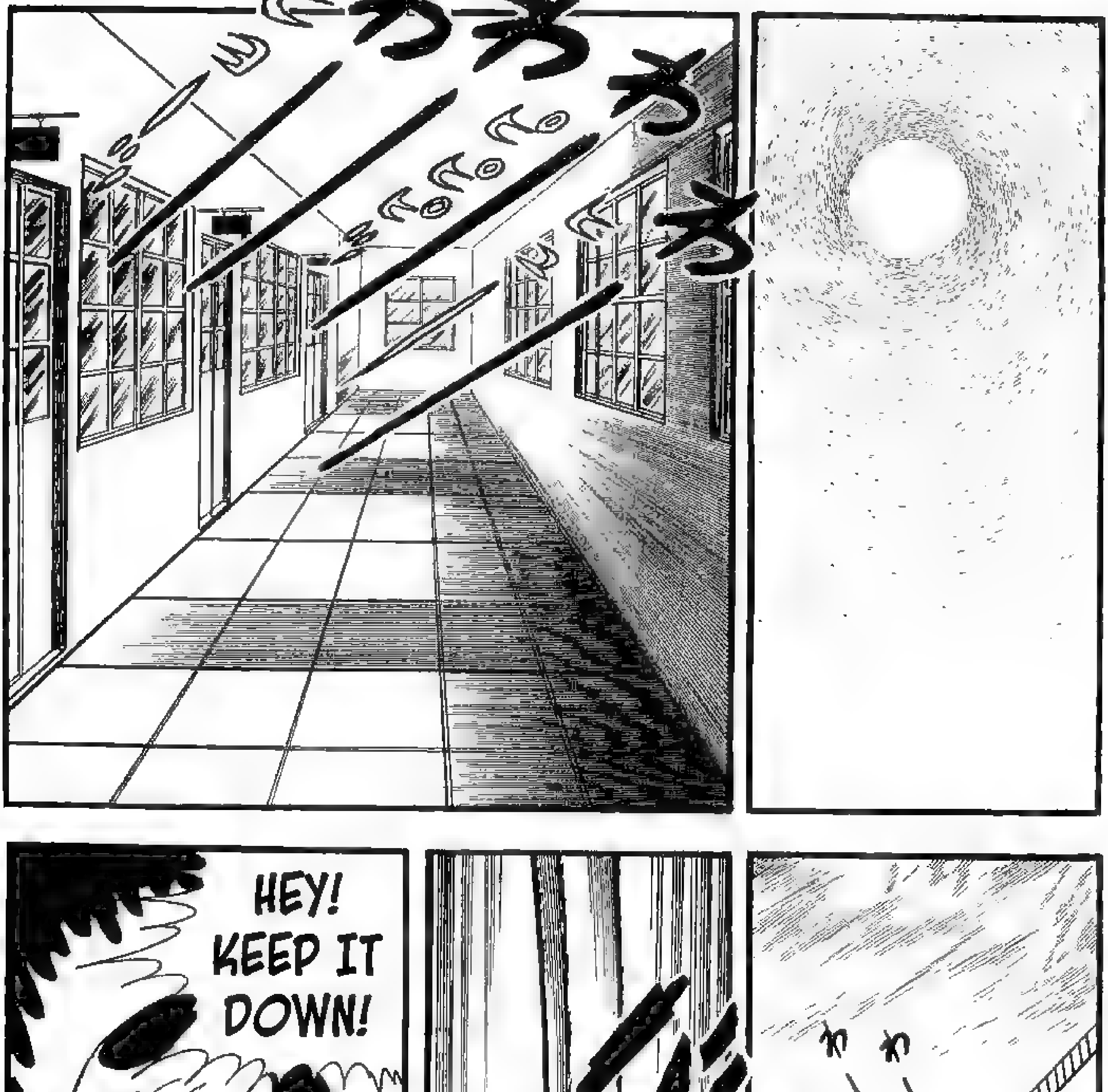
TS/N: OH YEAH? WHAT SHE GONNA DO W/ IT? READ TEH SHITASTIC SPIDER-MAN!?

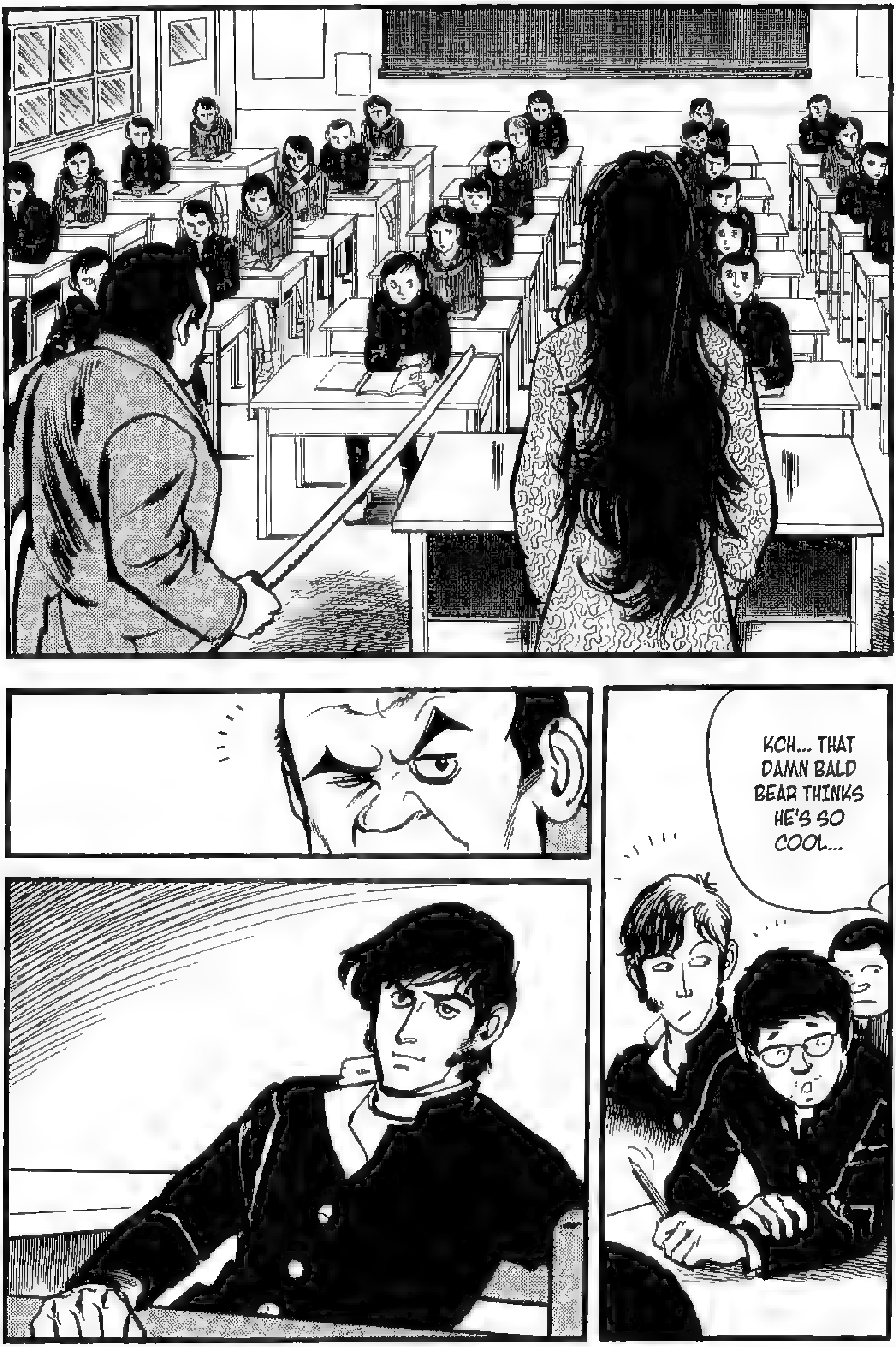

I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE BORED ...
THANK YOU, YU.
I REALLY AM...
BECAUSE NO ONE COMES TO VISIT ME.
EVERYONE IN OUR CLASS IS SO INSENSITIVE. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE THAT'S COME TO SEE ME.
NO ONE COMES?
NOT JUST ME. ALL THE FEMALE STUDENTS THAT WERE HOSPITALIZED...
THEY'RE ALL SICK OF IT. THEY ALL SAY THEY'VE LOST THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THEIR LOOKS. ISN'T THAT DISAPPOINTING?
I WONDER WHY...

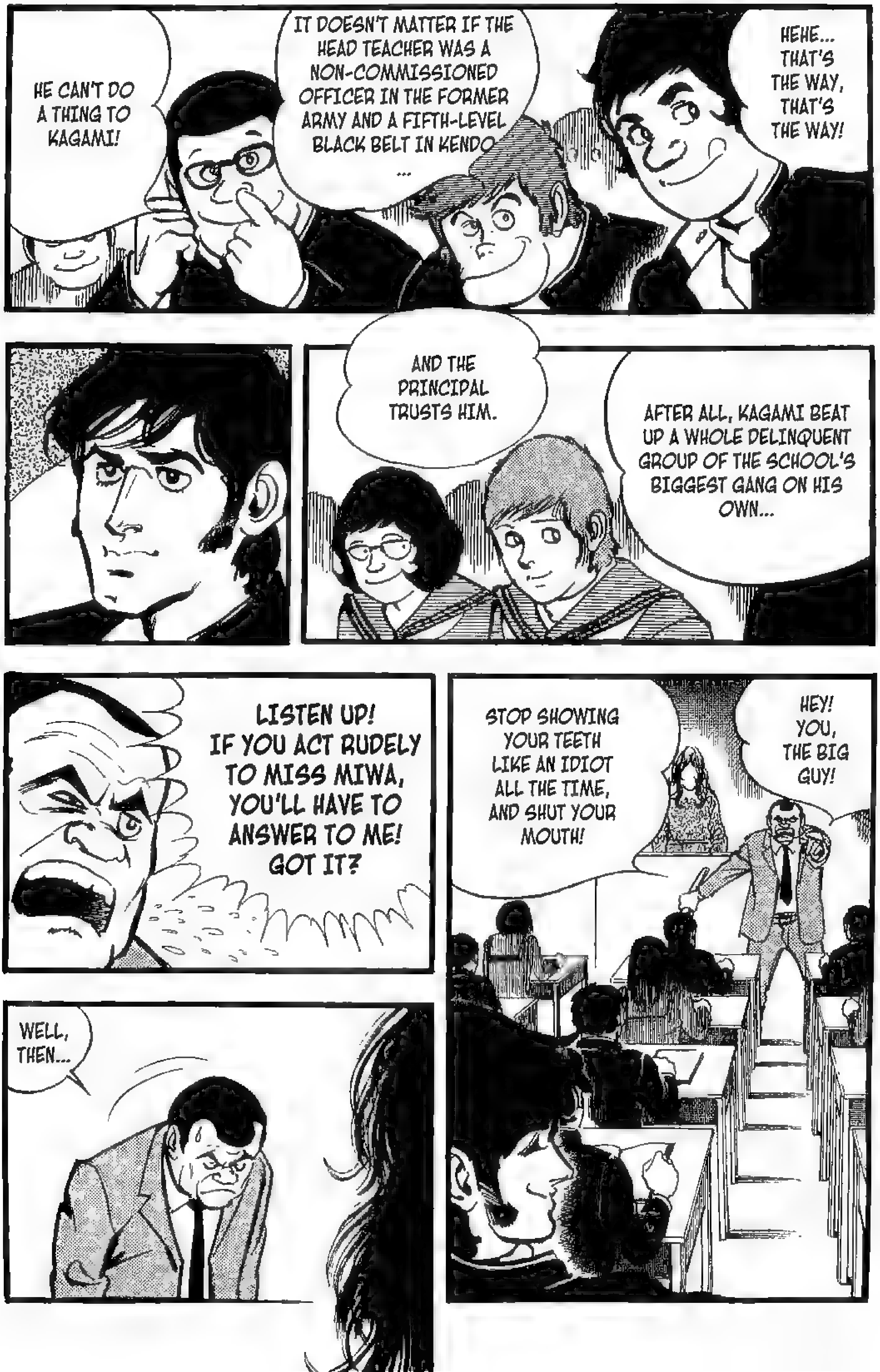

I KNOW! IT'S ALL HER FAULT!
HER...?
DON'T YOU GET IT, YU?
ALL THE BOYS IN THE CLASS CHANGED WHEN SHE CAME!
SHE'S SEDUCED THEM ALL!

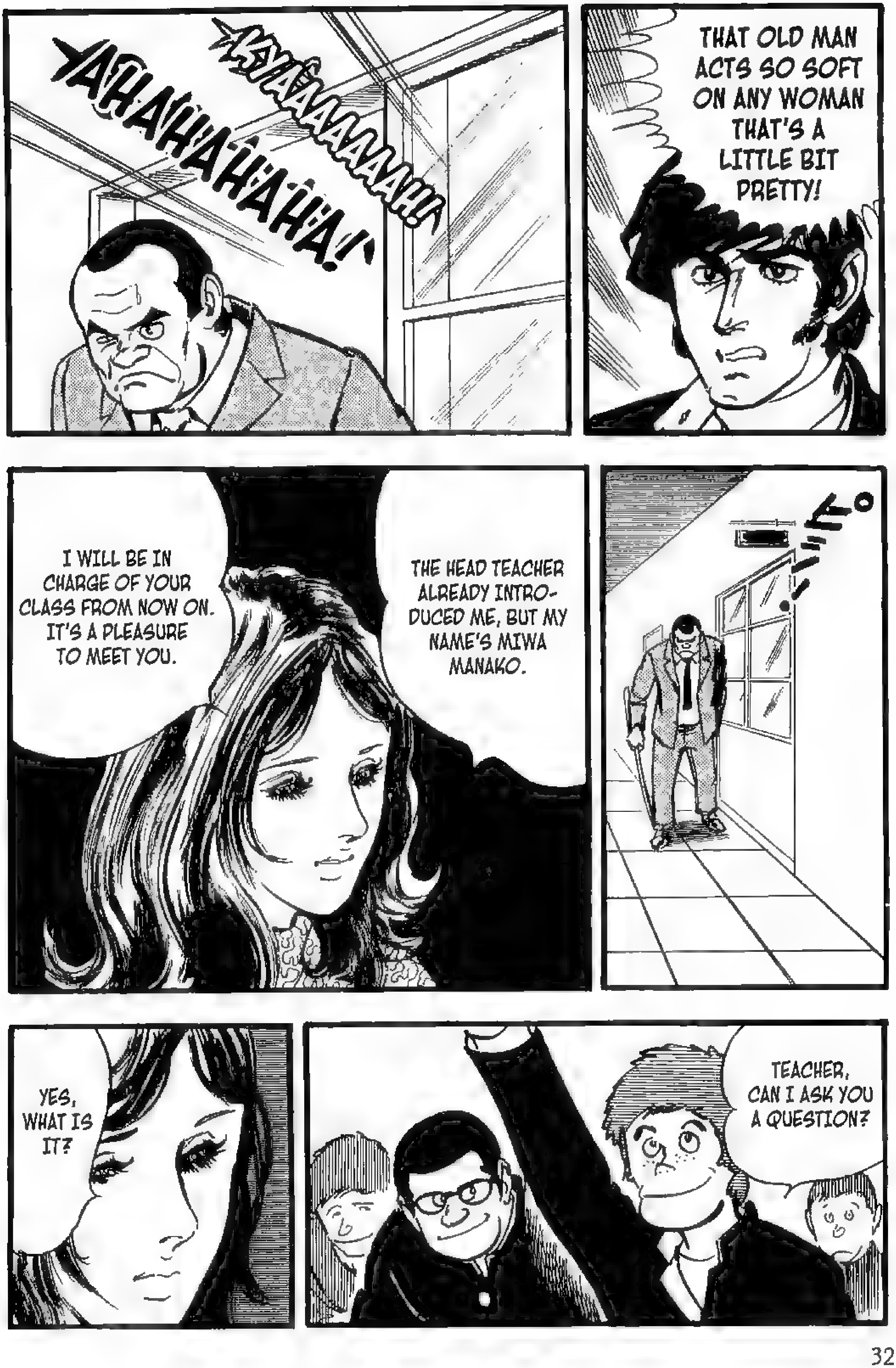

HEY, DO YOU THINK...
THAT SHE MIGHT'VE CAUSED THAT ACCIDENT ...?
DO YOU THINK SHE'S GETTING BACK AT US GIRLS FOR BAD-MOUTHING HER SO MUCH?
LIKE SHE'S CURSED US OR SOMETHING...?
BUT LISTEN TO ME. CURSED?
I FEEL LIKE I'M GOING CRAZY JUST BY SAYING THAT...
I DON'T THINK SO...

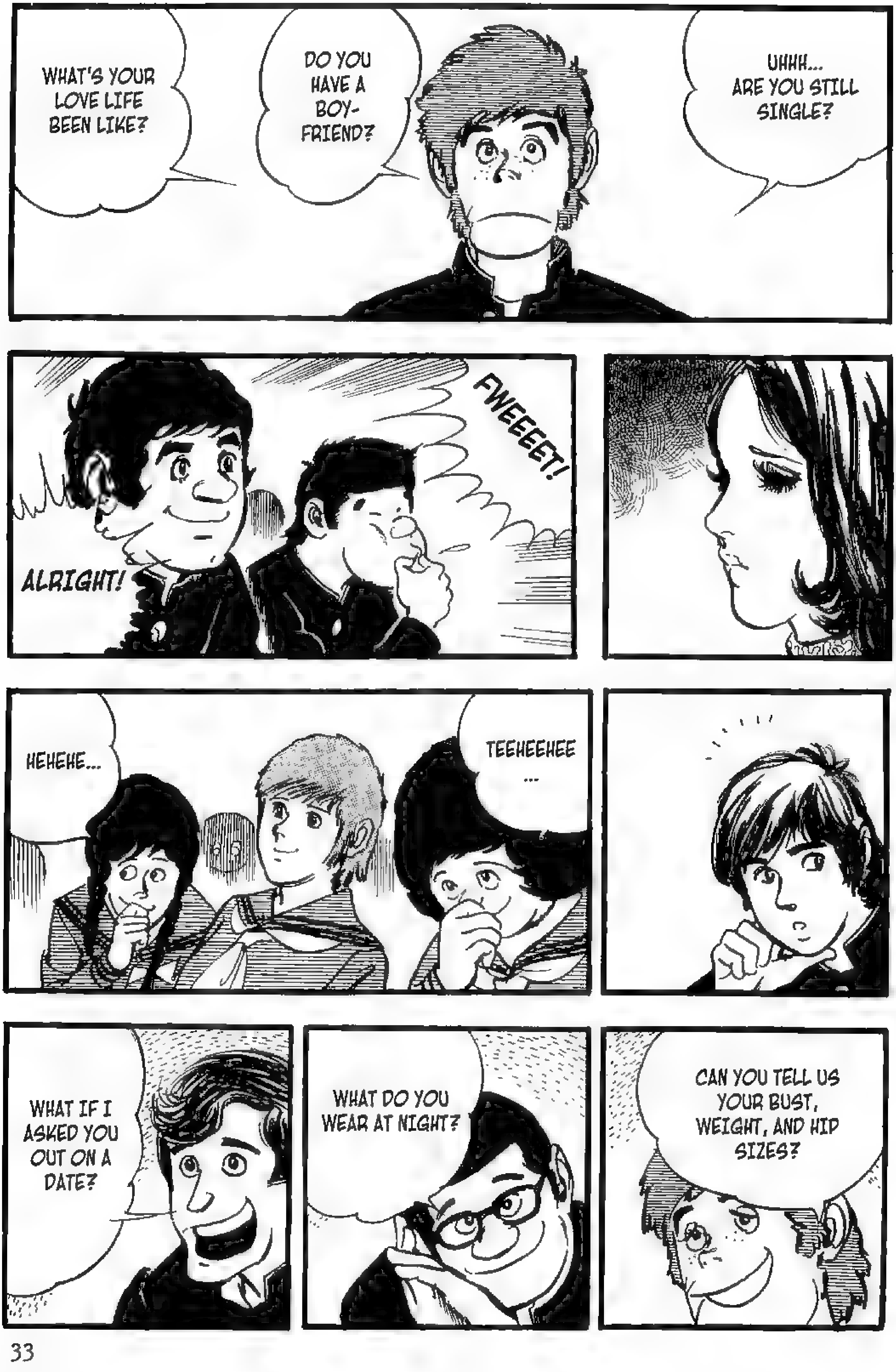

THE DOZENS OF PEOPLE WHO FELL DOWN THE STAIRS AND BROKE BONES OR GOT BRUISED WERE ALL GIRLS FROM OUR CLASS...
IT'S TOO IMPROBABLE TO BE A COINCIDENCE...
I FIRST FELT AN EXTRAORDINARY OMINOUS EVIL FROM THAT TEACHER
THAT DAY A MONTH AGO...

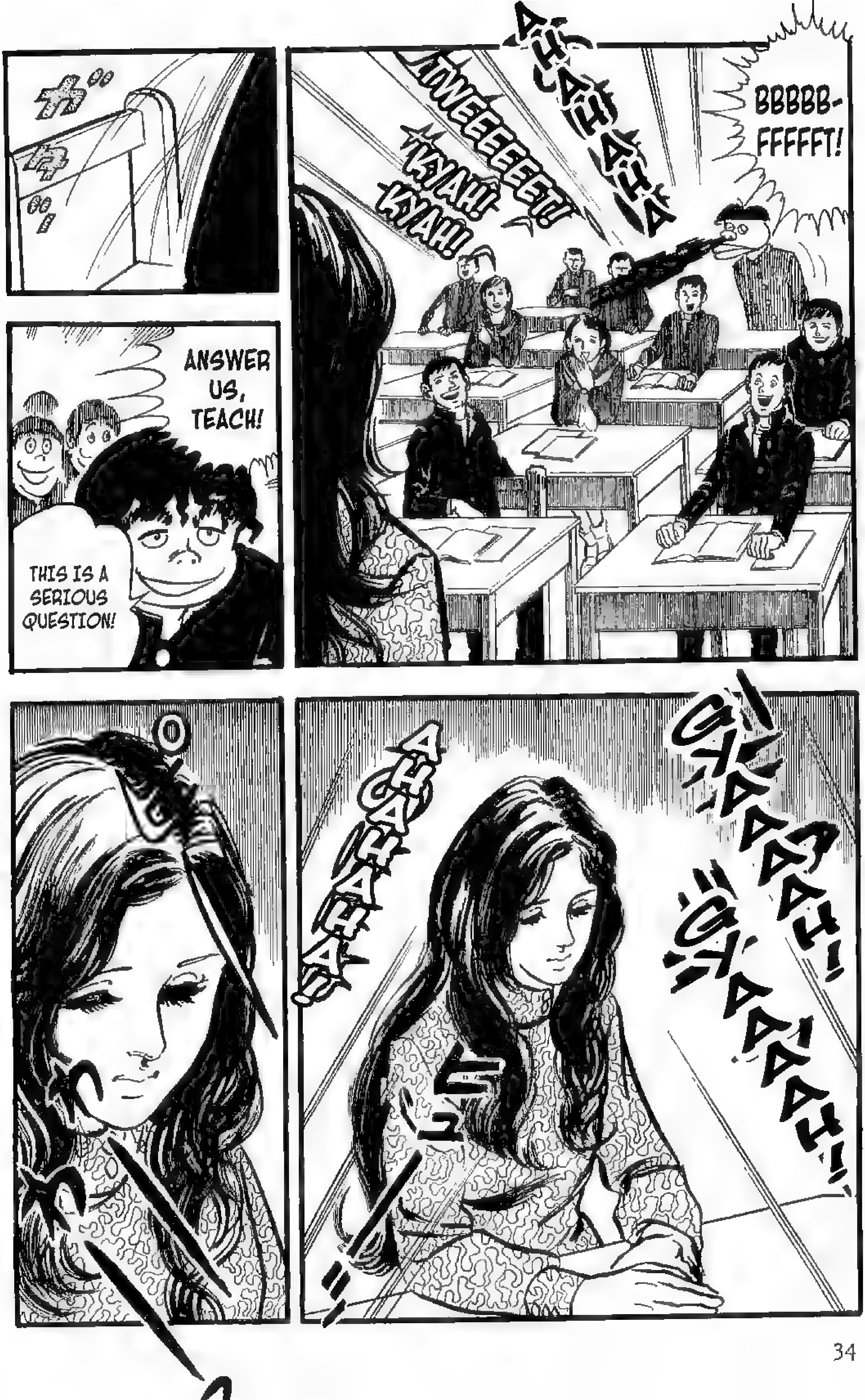

HEY! KEEP IT DOWN!
HOW LONG DO YOU HAVE TO KEEP SHOUTING!?

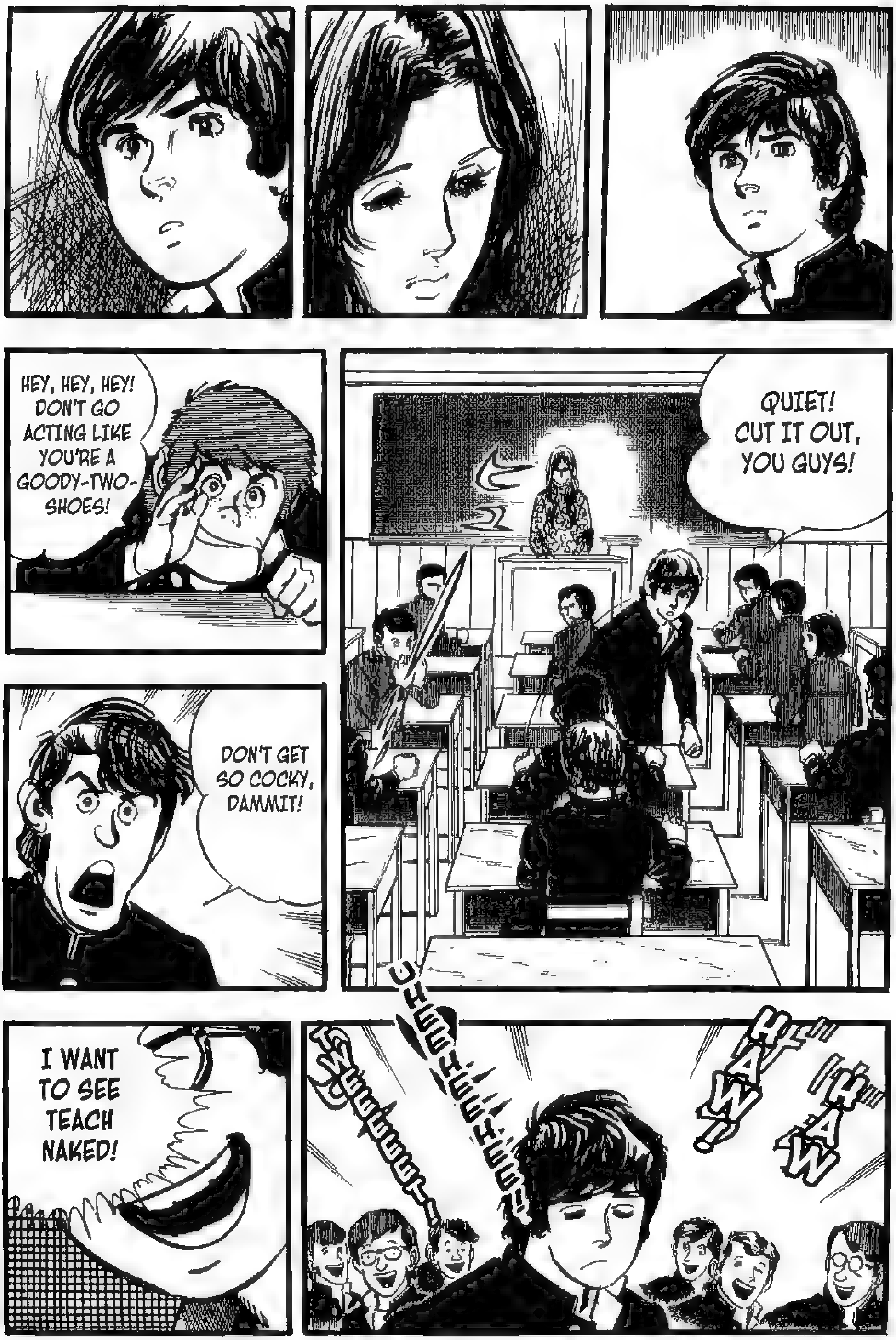

KCH... THAT DAMN BALD BEAR THINKS HE'S SO COOL...

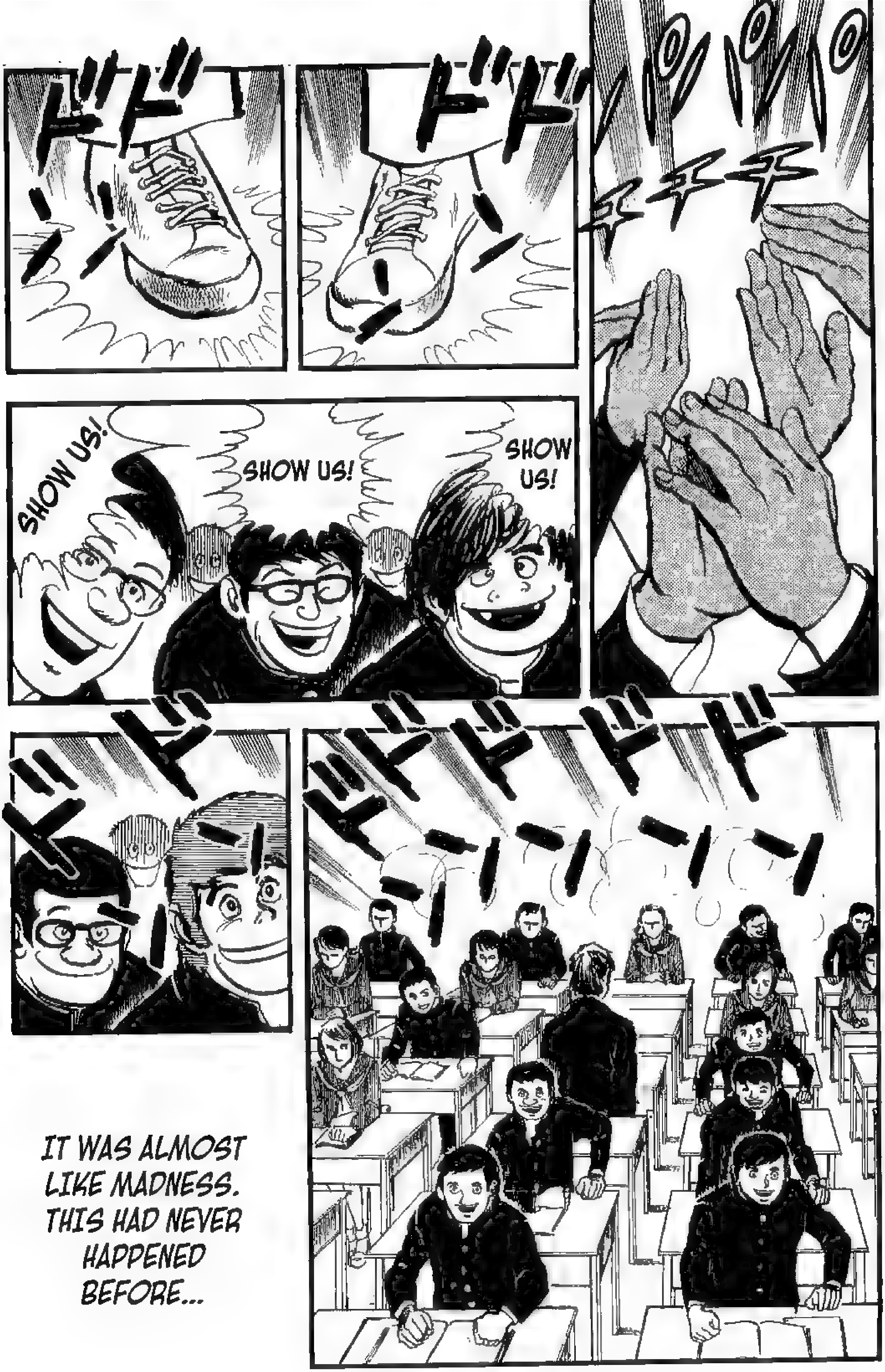

HEHE... THAT'S THE WAY, THAT'S THE WAY!
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF THE HEAD TEACHER WAS A NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICER IN THE FORMER ARMY AND A FIFTH-LEVEL BLACK BELT IN KENDO ...
HE CAN'T DO A THING TO KAGAMI!
AFTER ALL, KAGAMI BEAT UP A WHOLE DELINQUENT GROUP OF THE SCHOOL'S BIGGEST GANG ON HIS OWN...
AND THE PRINCIPAL TRUSTS HIM.
HEY! YOU, THE BIG GUY!
STOP SHOWING YOUR TEETH LIKE AN IDIOT ALL THE TIME, AND SHUT YOUR MOUTH!
LISTEN UP! IF YOU ACT RUDELY TO MISS MIWA, YOU'LL HAVE TO ANSWER TO ME! GOT IT?
WELL, THEN...

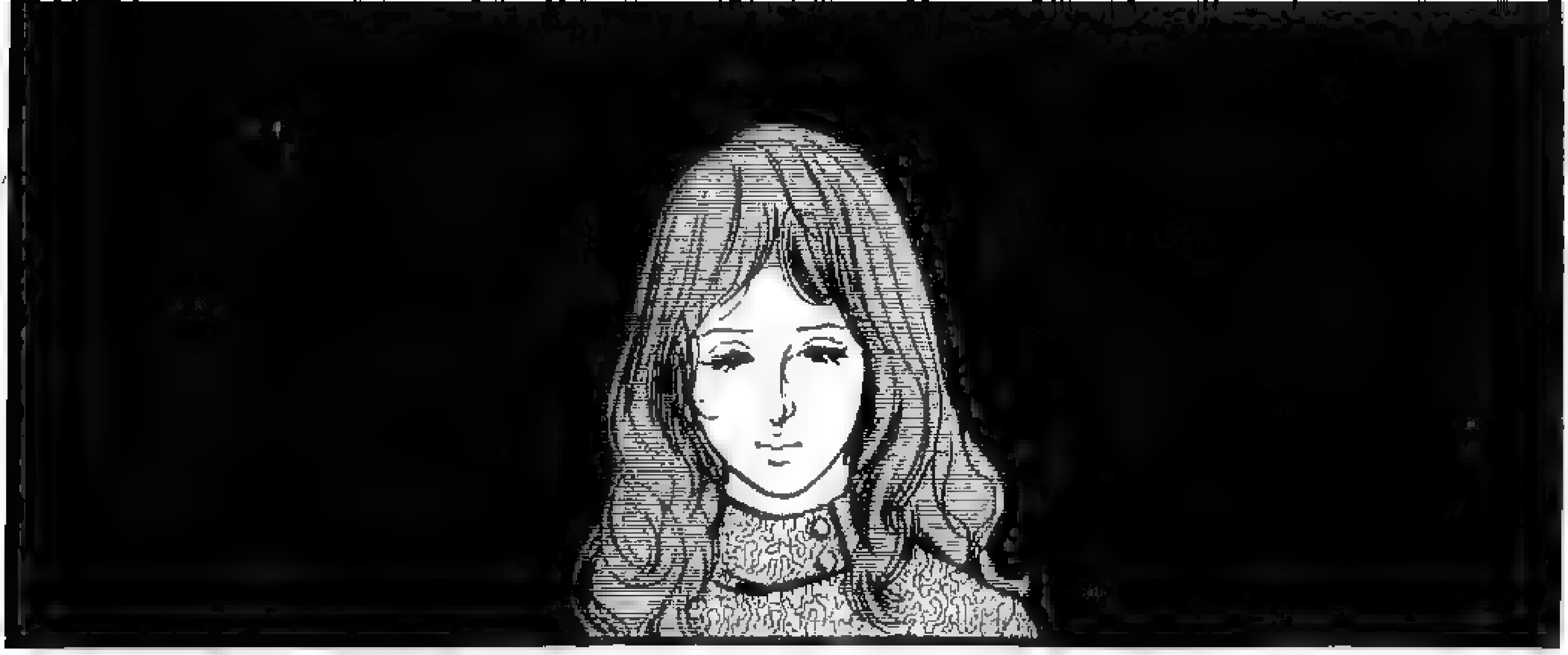

THAT OLD MAN ACTS SO SOFT ON ANY WOMAN THAT'S A LITTLE BIT PRETTY!
KYAAAAAAAAAH!!
AHAHAHAHAHA!
THE HEAD TEACHER ALREADY INTRODUCED ME, BUT MY NAME'S MIWA MANAKO.
I WILL BE IN CHARGE OF YOUR CLASS FROM NOW ON. IT'S A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.
TEACHER, CAN I ASK YOU A QUESTION?
YES, WHAT IS IT?

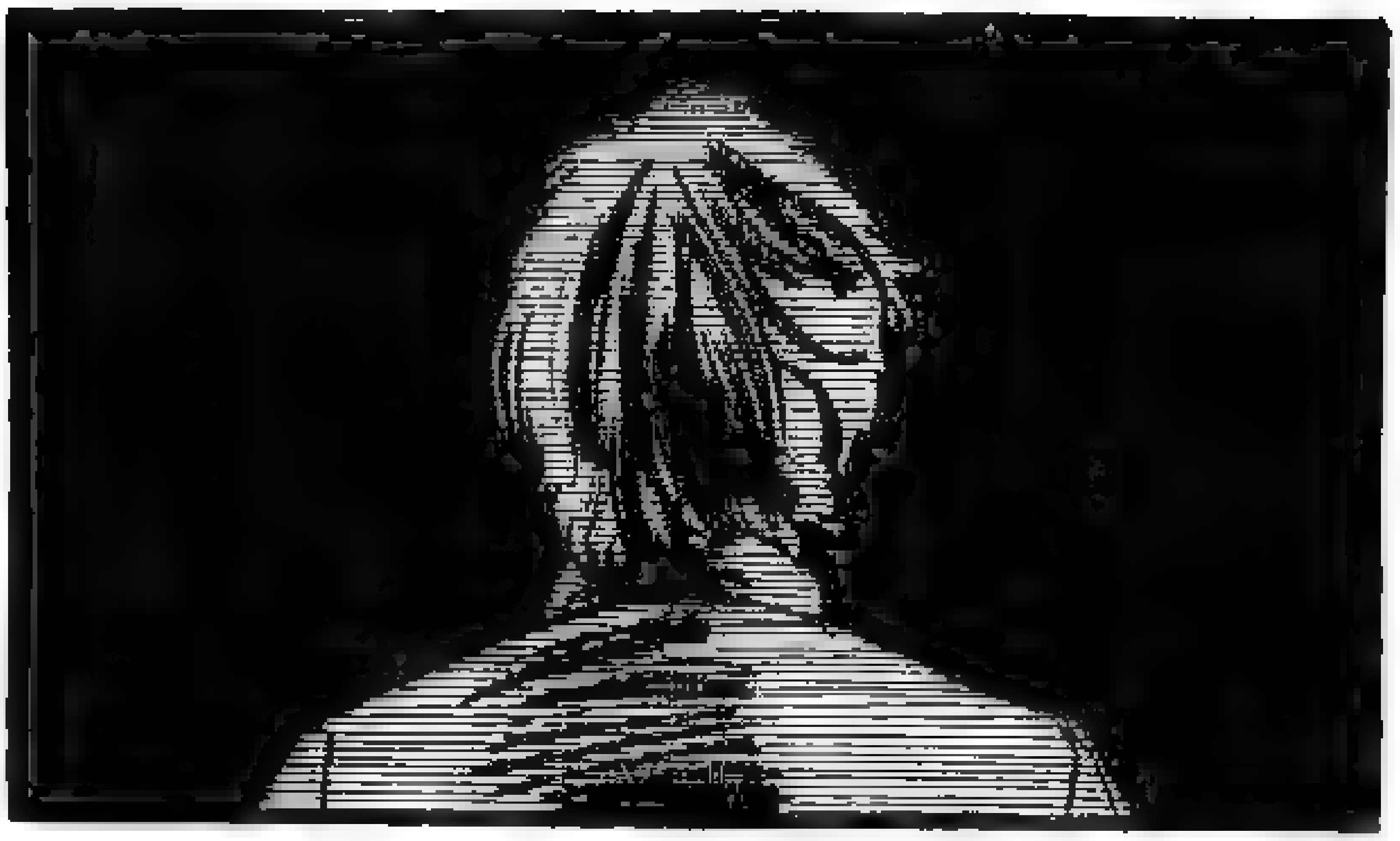

UHHH... ARE YOU STILL SINGLE?
DO YOU HAVE A BOY-FRIEND?
WHAT'S YOUR LOVE LIFE BEEN LIKE?
FWEEEET!
ALRIGHT!
TEEHEEHEE ...
HEHEHE...
CAN YOU TELL US YOUR BUST, WEIGHT, AND HIP SIZES?
WHAT DO YOU WEAR AT NIGHT?
WHAT IF I ASKED YOU OUT ON A DATE?

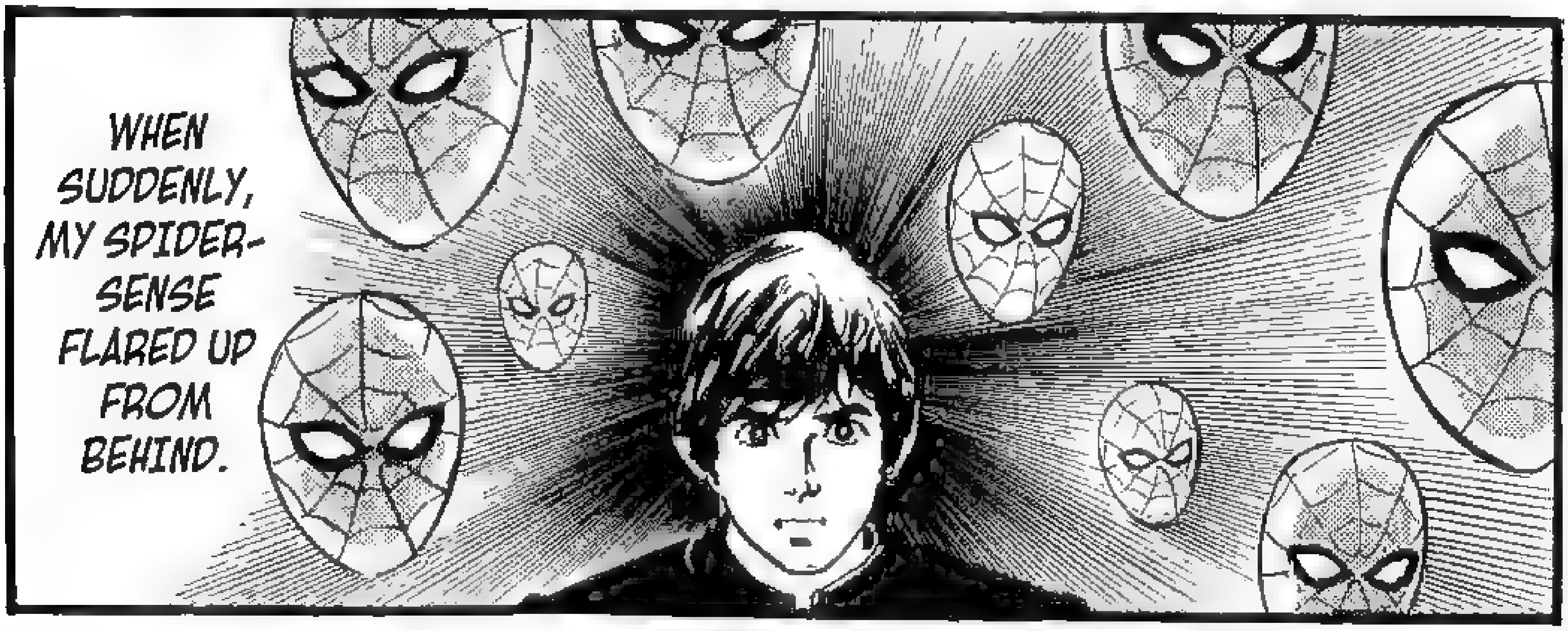

AHAHAHAHA
WEEEEEEET!!
KYAH! KYAH!
BBBBB-FFFFFT!
ANSWER US, TEACH!
THIS IS A SERIOUS QUESTION!
GYAAAAH!
GYAAAAAH!!
AHAHAHAHA!

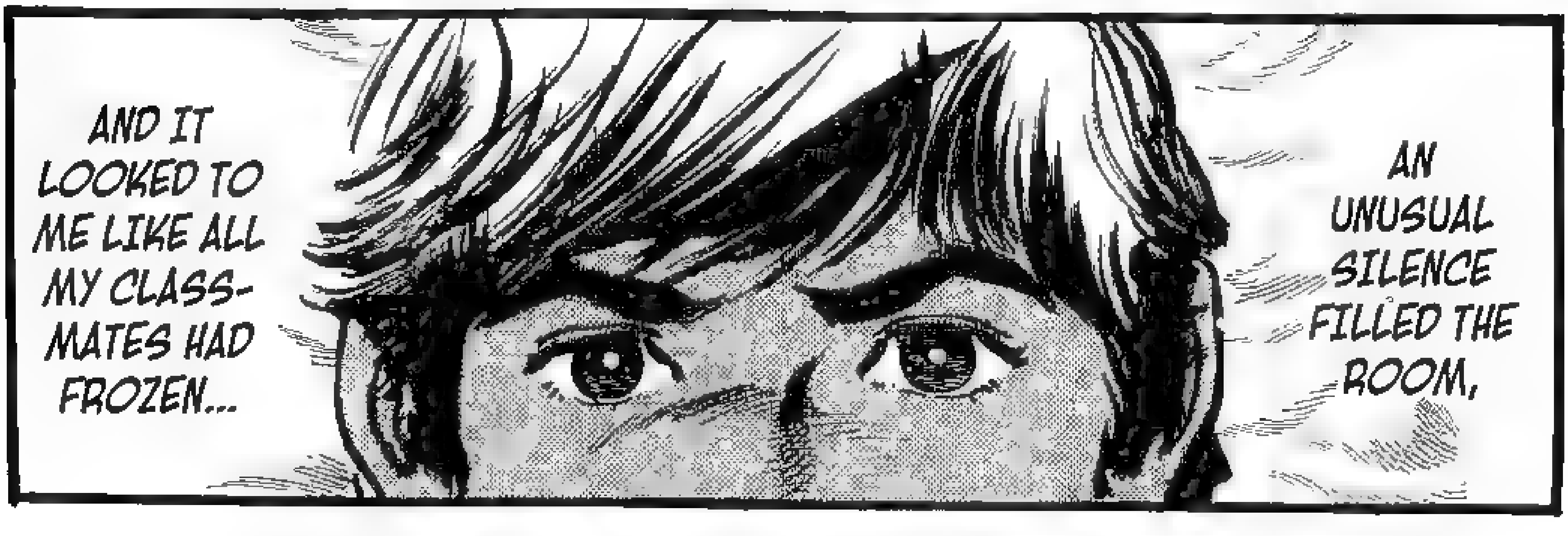

HEY, HEY, HEY! DON'T GO ACTING LIKE YOU'RE A GOODY-TWO-SHOES!
QUIET! CUT IT OUT, YOU GUYS!
DON'T GET SO COCKY, DAMMIT!
I WANT TO SEE TEACH NAKED!
TWEEEEET!
UHEHEHEHE!
HAW!
HAW

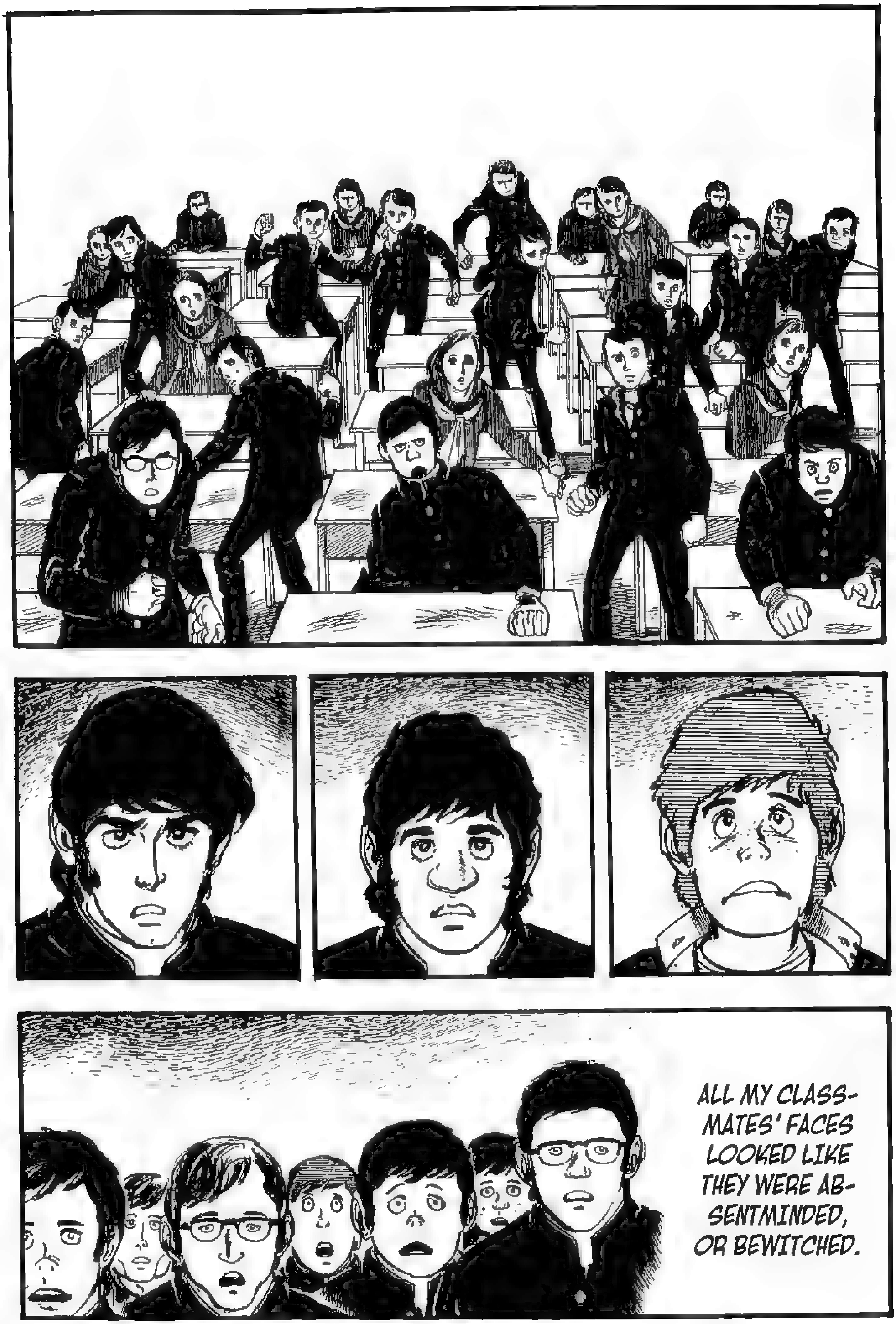

パパパ
チチチ
ドドドッ
ドドッ
SHOW US!
SHOW US!
SHOW US!
ドドドドドーッ
ドドーッ
IT WAS ALMOST LIKE MADNESS. THIS HAD NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE...

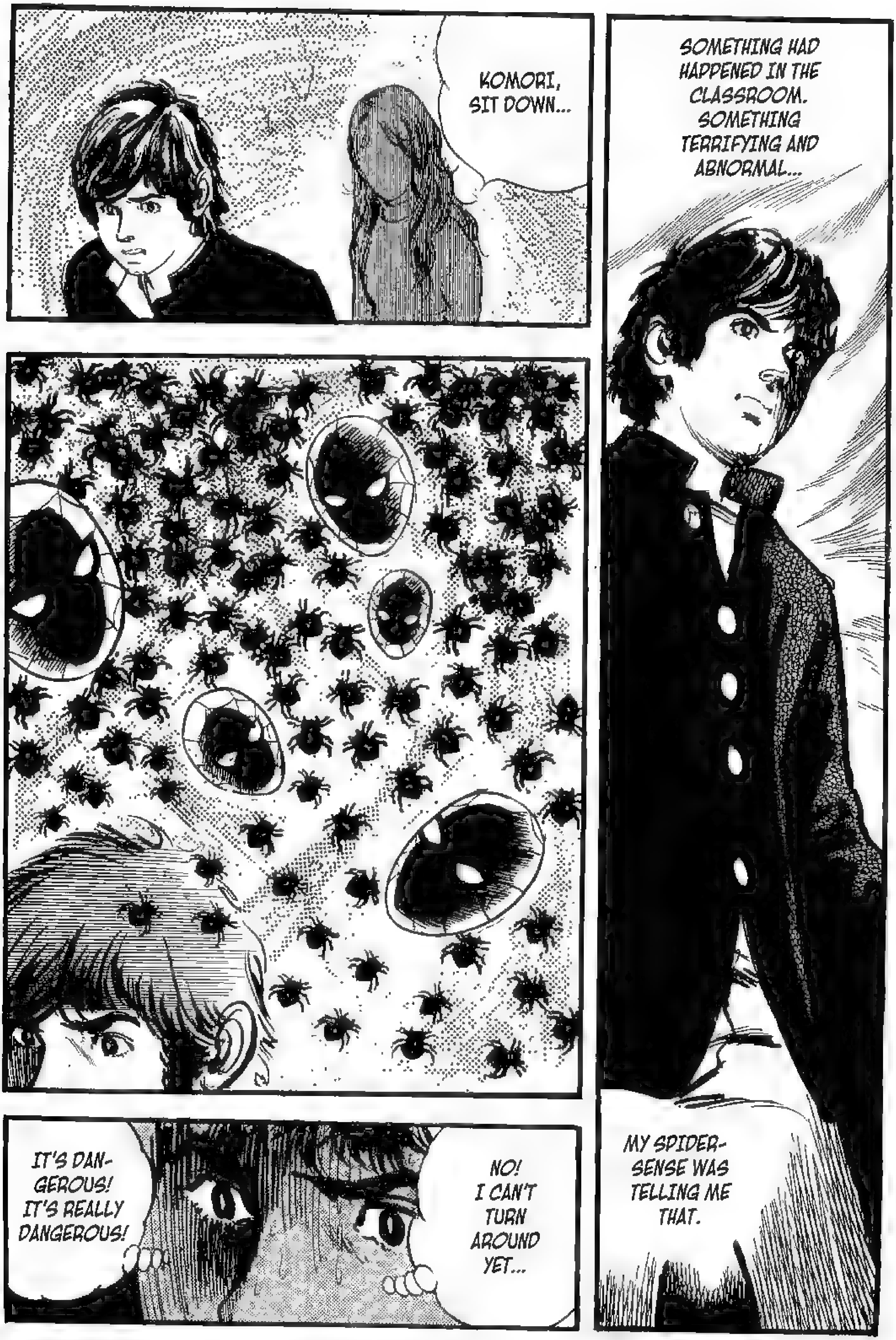


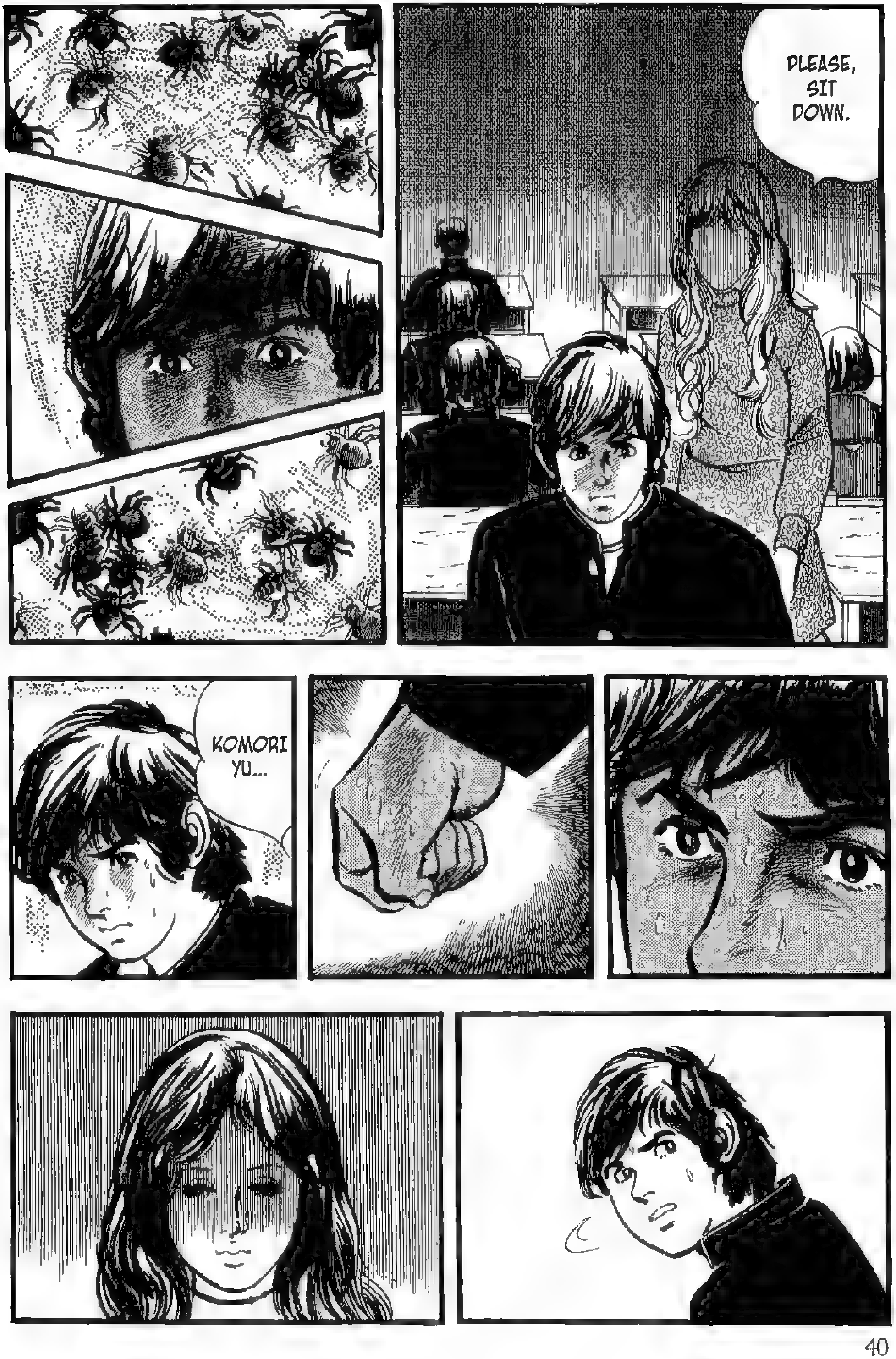

AT FIRST, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.
I STAYED STANDING, WITH MY BACK TO THE TEACHER'S DESK.

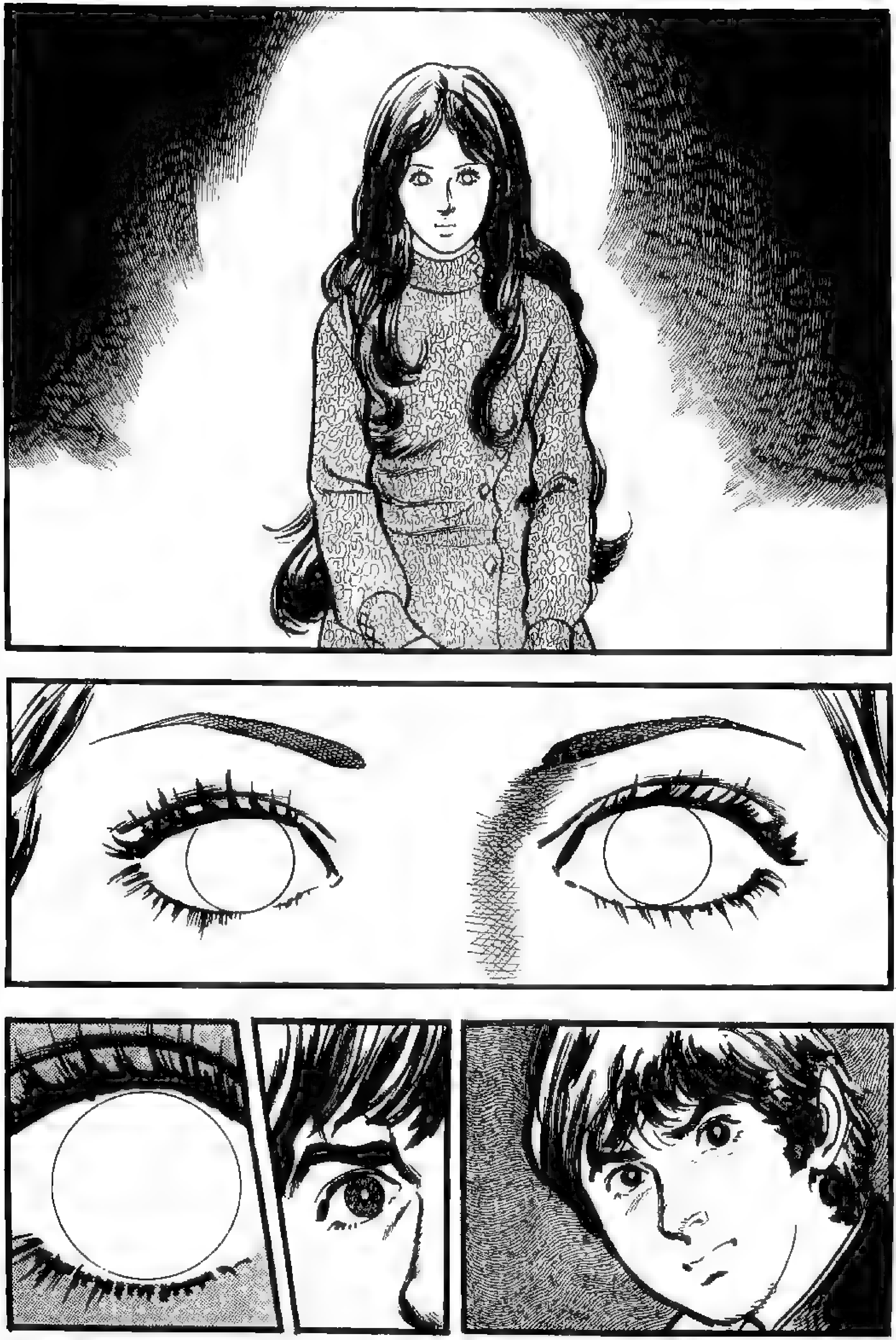

WHEN SUDDENLY, MY SPIDER-SENSE FLARED UP FROM BEHIND.

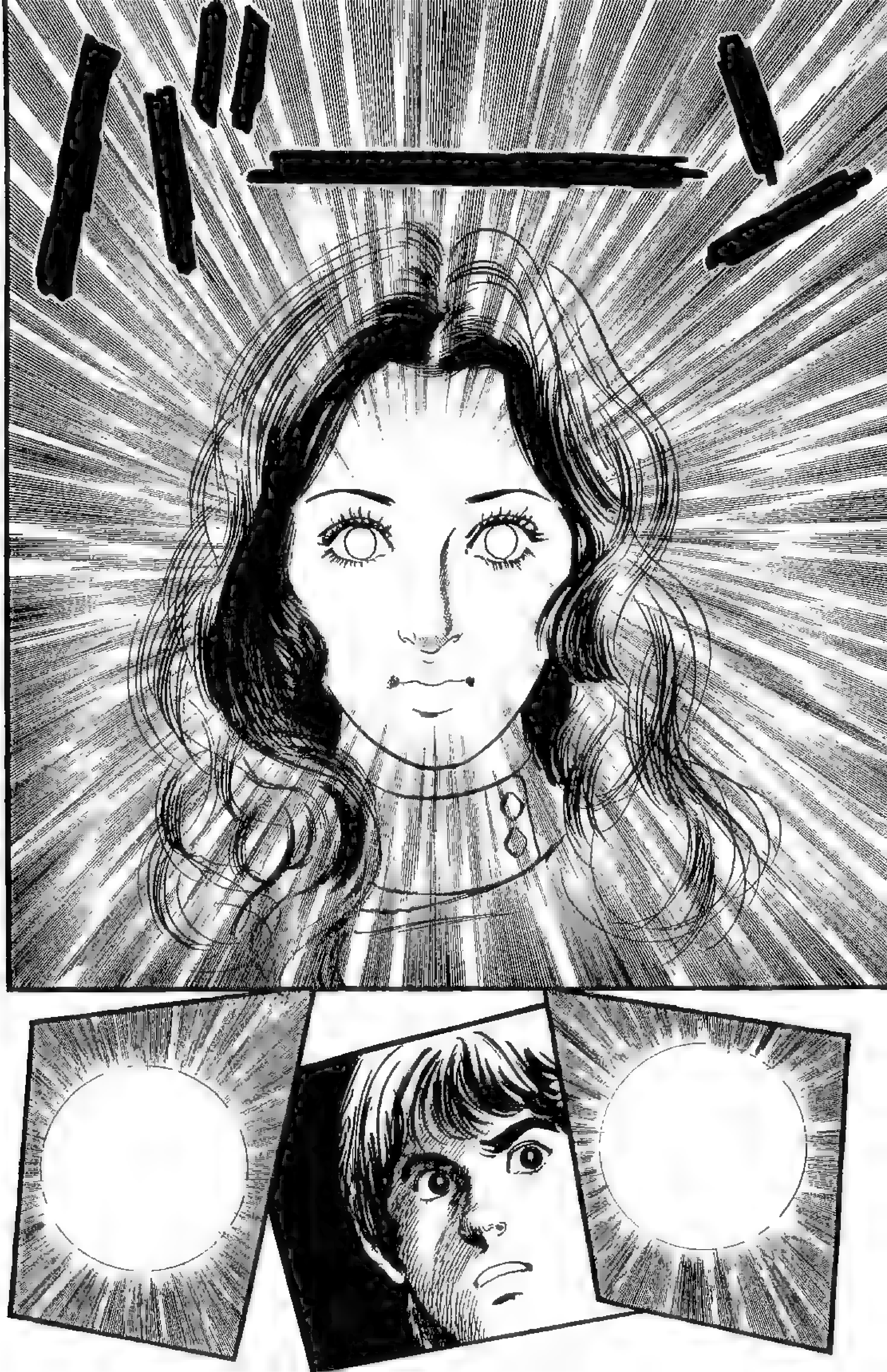

AN UNUSUAL SILENCE FILLED THE ROOM,
AND IT LOOKED TO ME LIKE ALL MY CLASSMATES HAD FROZEN...


ALL MY CLASSMATES' FACES LOOKED LIKE THEY WERE ABSENTMINDED, OR BEWITCHED.


SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED IN THE CLASSROOM. SOMETHING TERRIFYING AND ABNORMAL...
MY SPIDER-SENSE WAS TELLING ME THAT.
KOMORI, SIT DOWN...
NO! I CAN'T TURN AROUND YET...
IT'S DANGEROUS! IT'S REALLY DANGEROUS!


PLEASE, SIT DOWN.
KOMORI YU...

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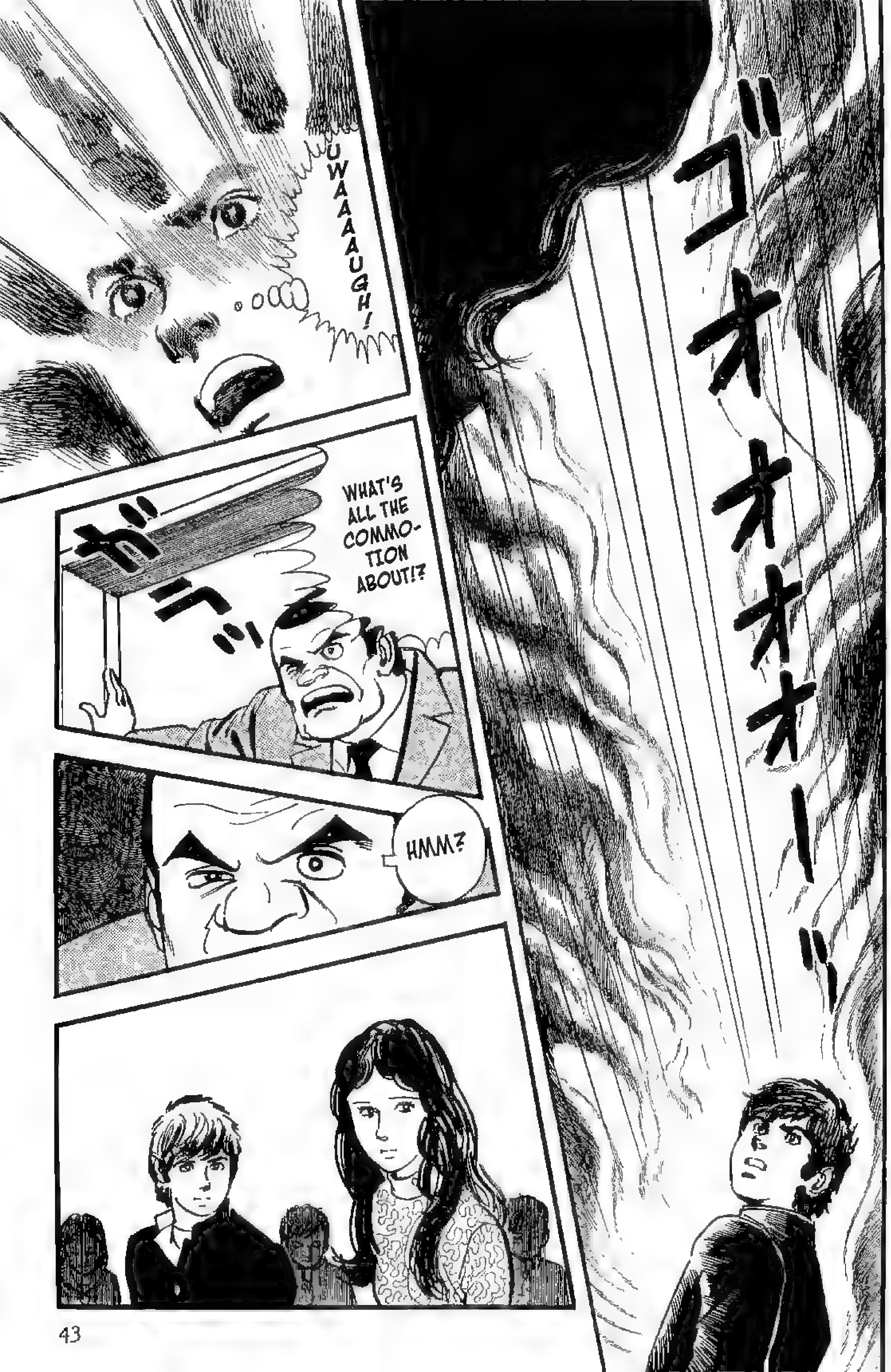
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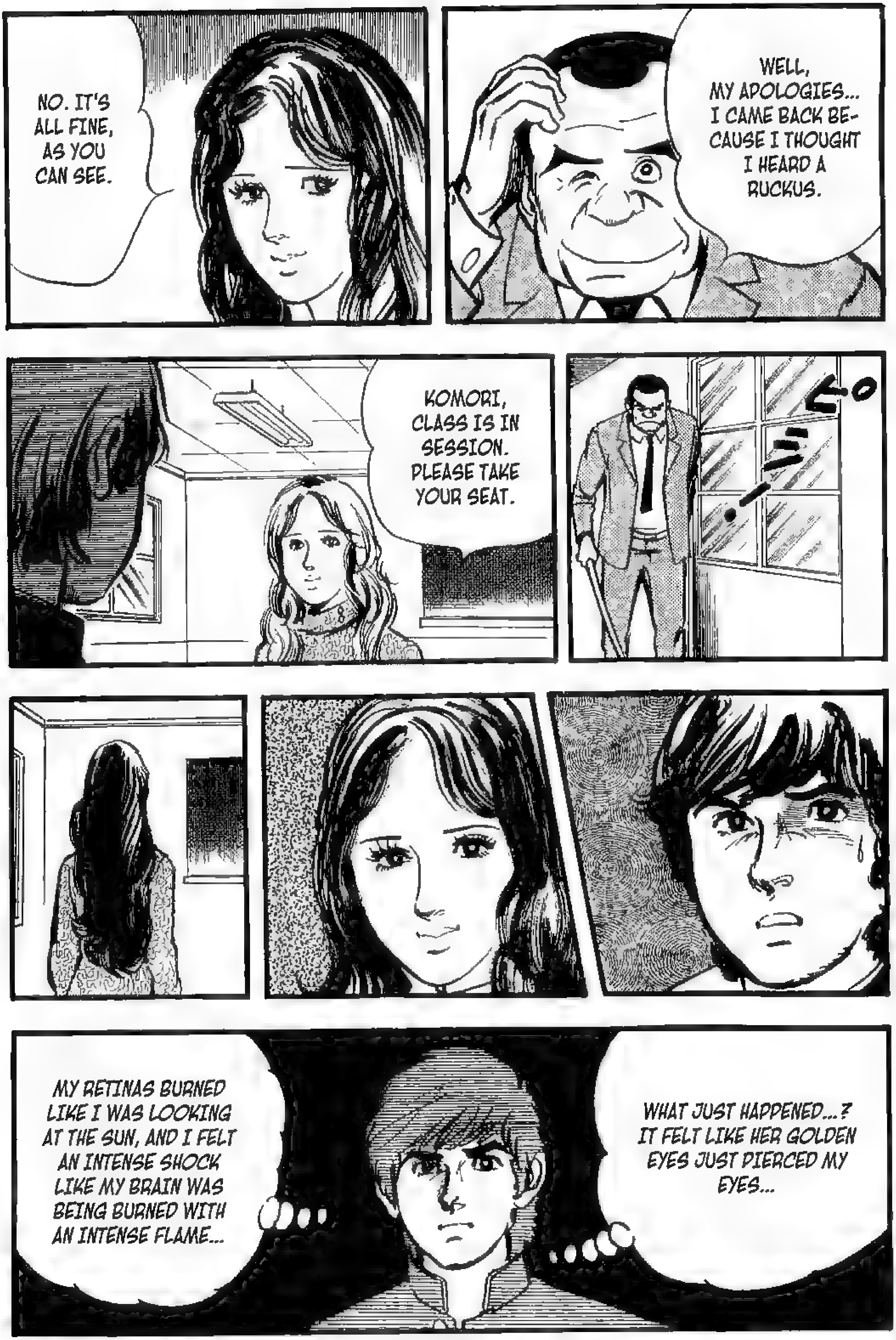
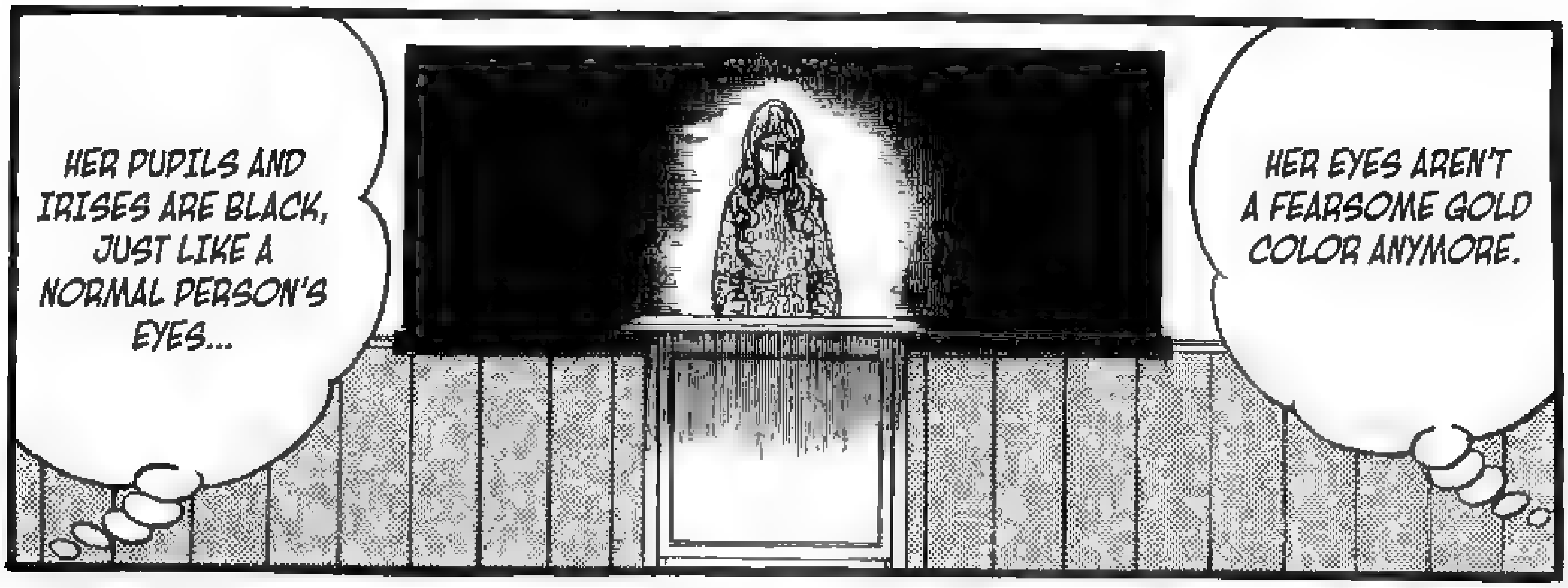
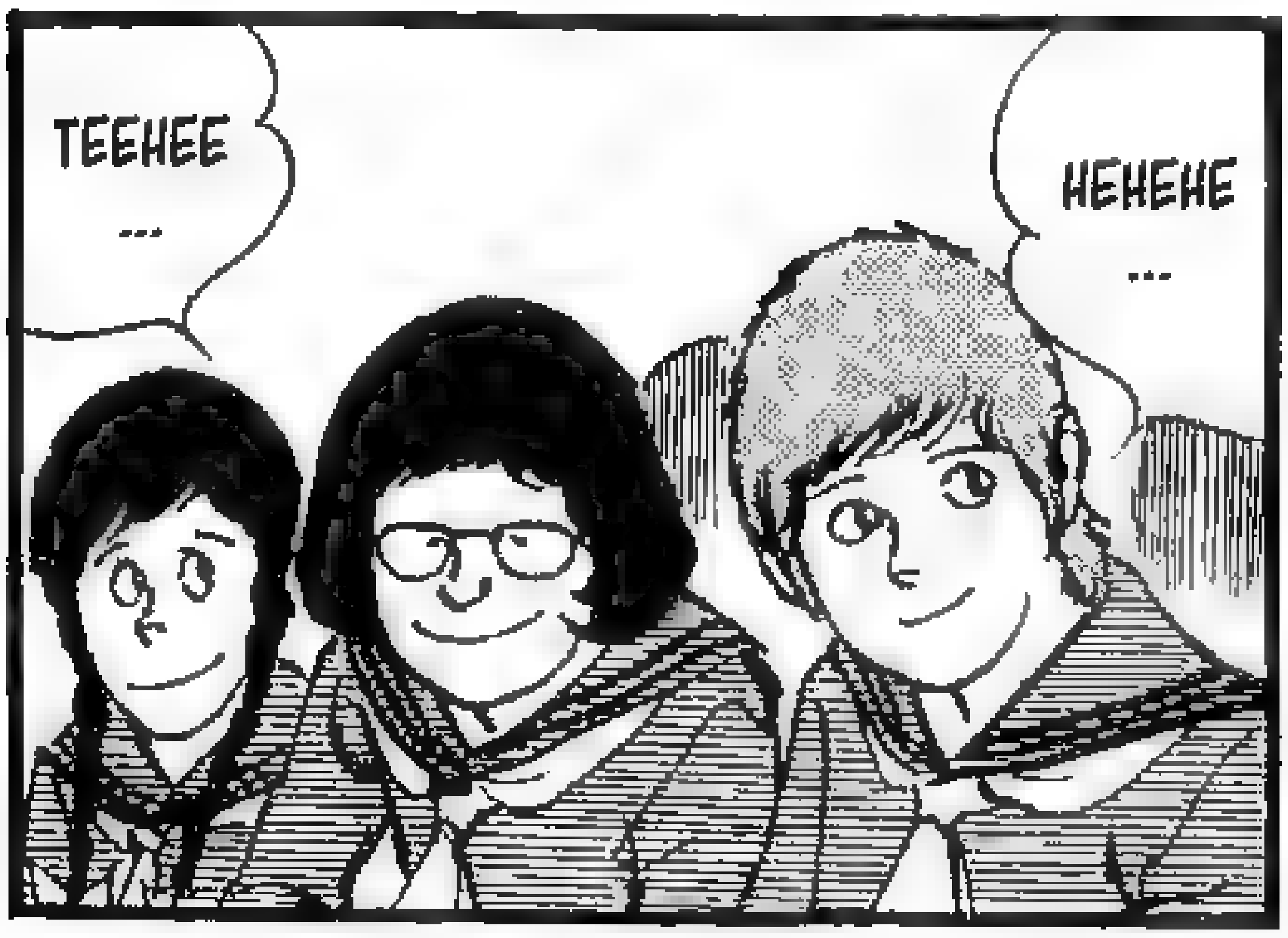
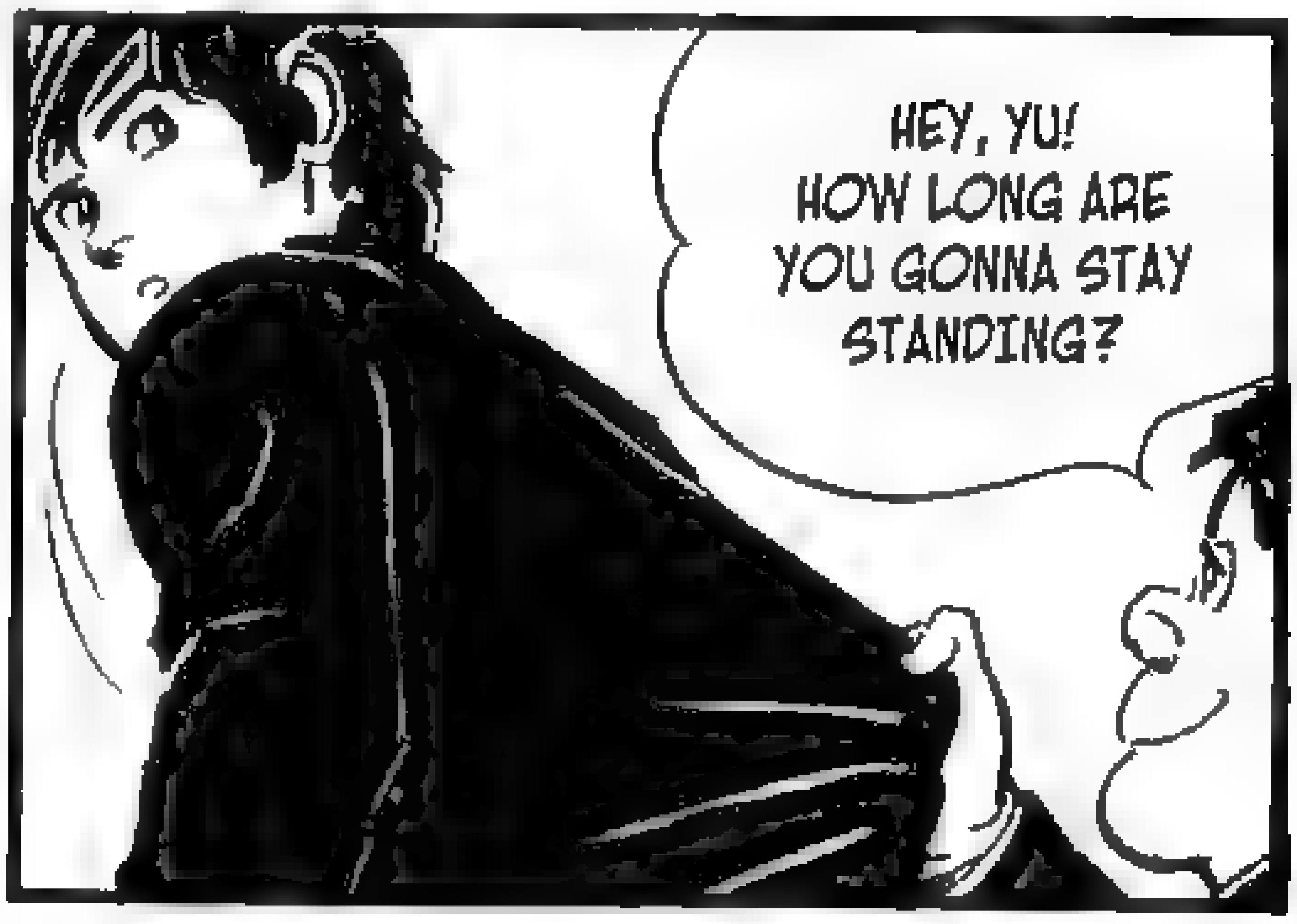
UWAAAAUGH!
ガラッ
WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION ABOUT!?
HMM?

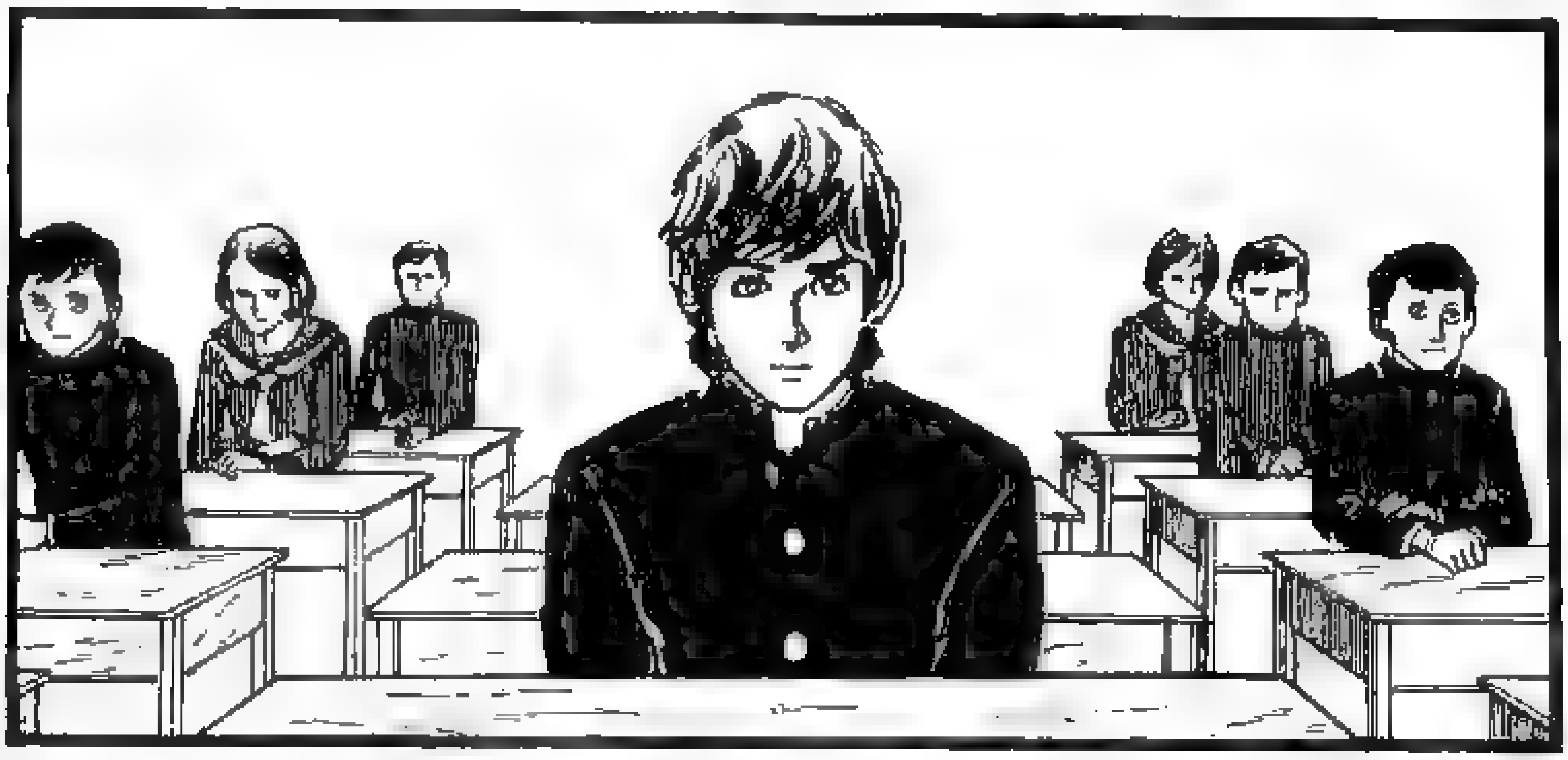

WELL, MY APOLOGIES... I CAME BACK BECAUSE I THOUGHT I HEARD A RUCKUS.
NO. IT'S ALL FINE, AS YOU CAN SEE.
KOMORI, CLASS IS IN SESSION. PLEASE TAKE YOUR SEAT.
WHAT JUST HAPPENED...? IT FELT LIKE HER GOLDEN EYES JUST PIERCED MY EYES...
MY RETINAS BURNED LIKE I WAS LOOKING AT THE SUN, AND I FELT AN INTENSE SHOCK LIKE MY BRAIN WAS BEING BURNED WITH AN INTENSE FLAME...


HER PUPILS AND IRISES ARE BLACK, JUST LIKE A NORMAL PERSON'S EYES...
HER EYES AREN'T A FEARSOME GOLD COLOR ANYMORE.

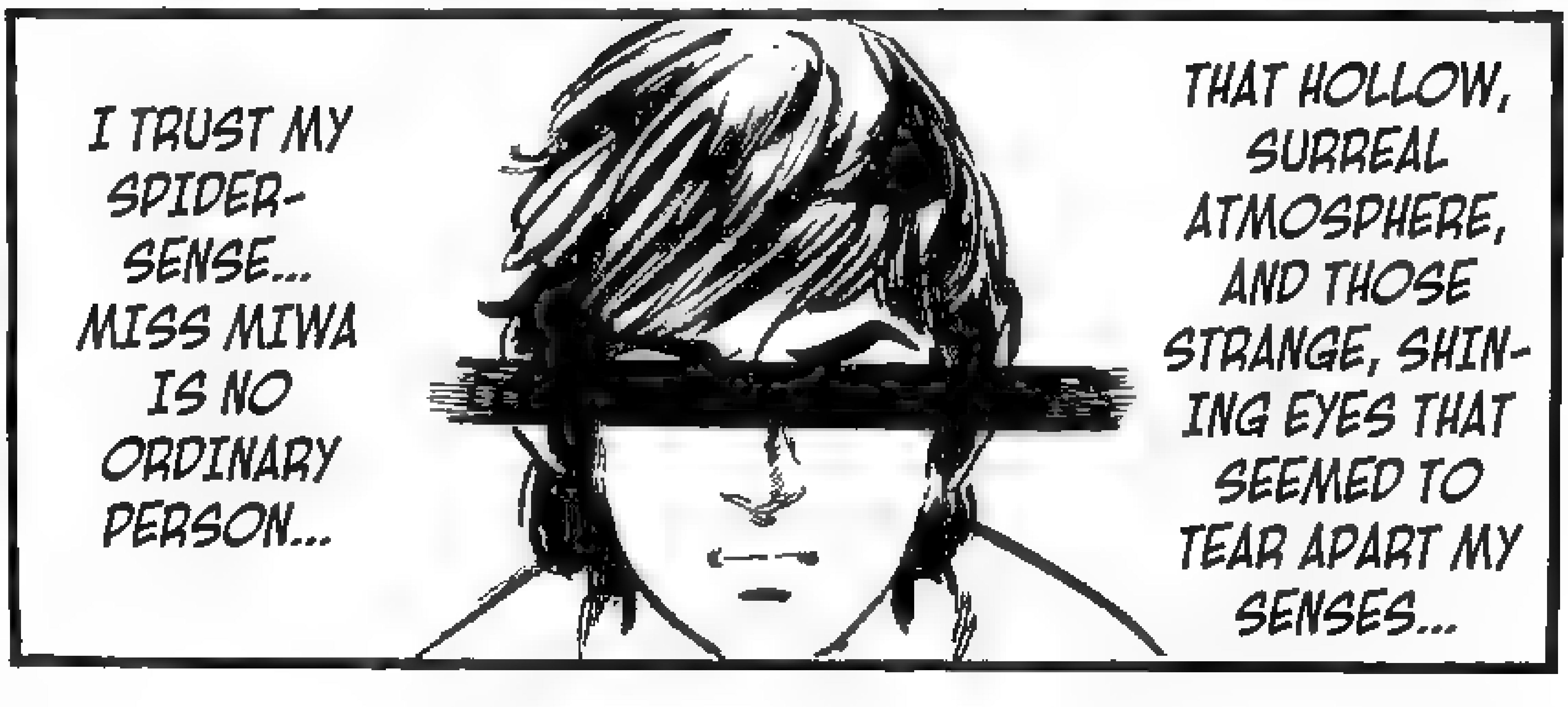

TEEHEE ...
HEHEHE ...

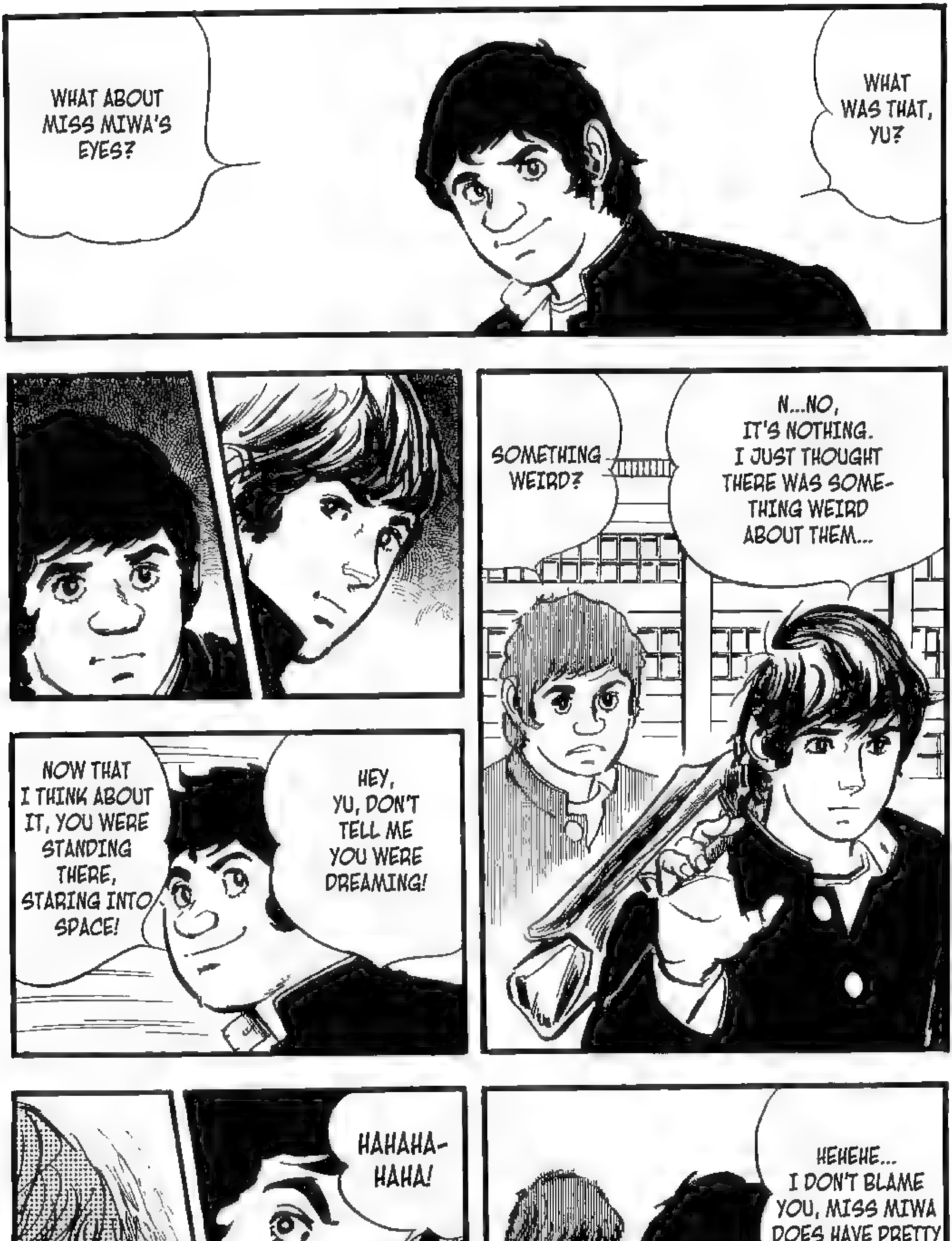

HEY, YU! HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA STAY STANDING?

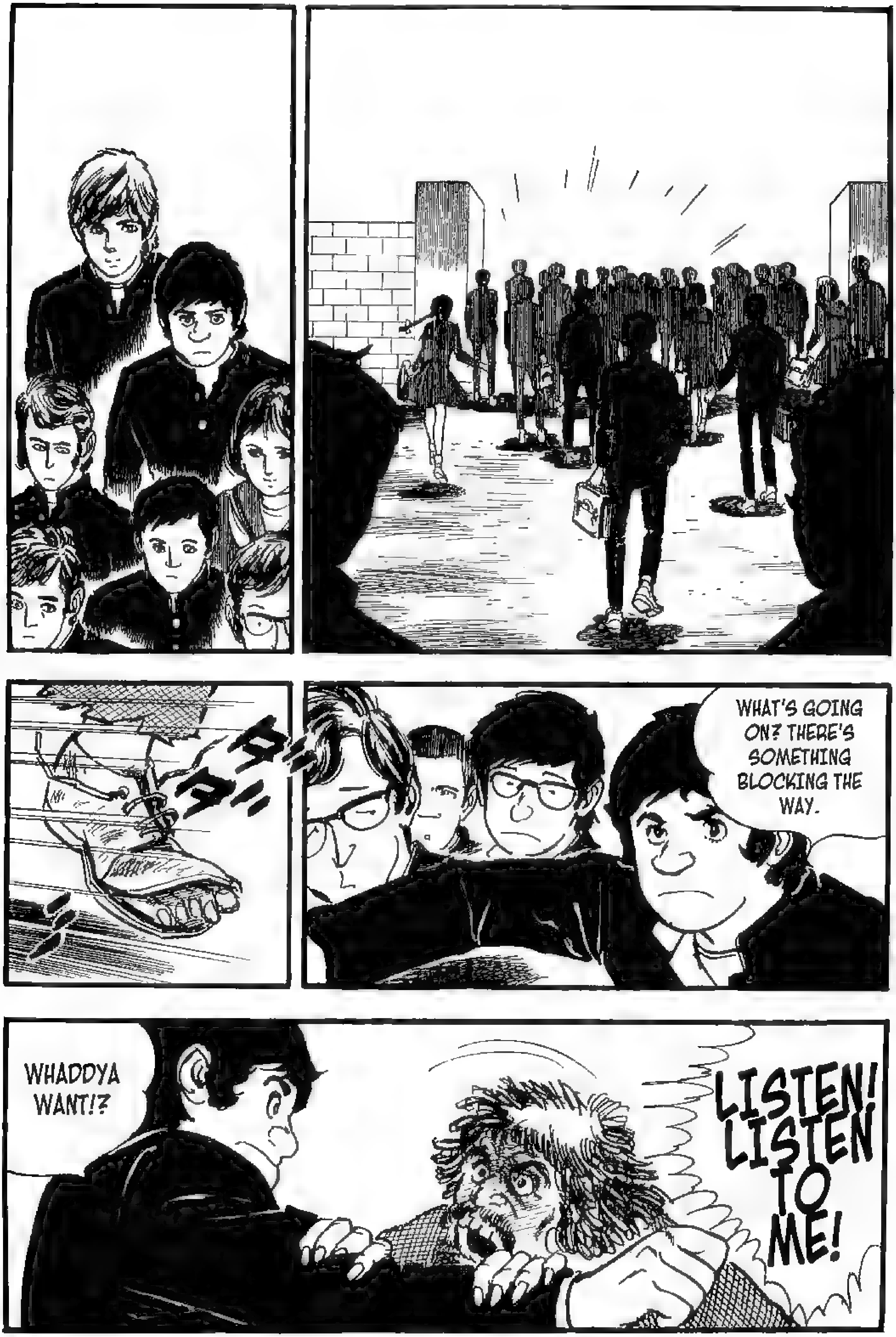
IT FELT JUST LIKE A PERFECTLY NORMAL CLASS.

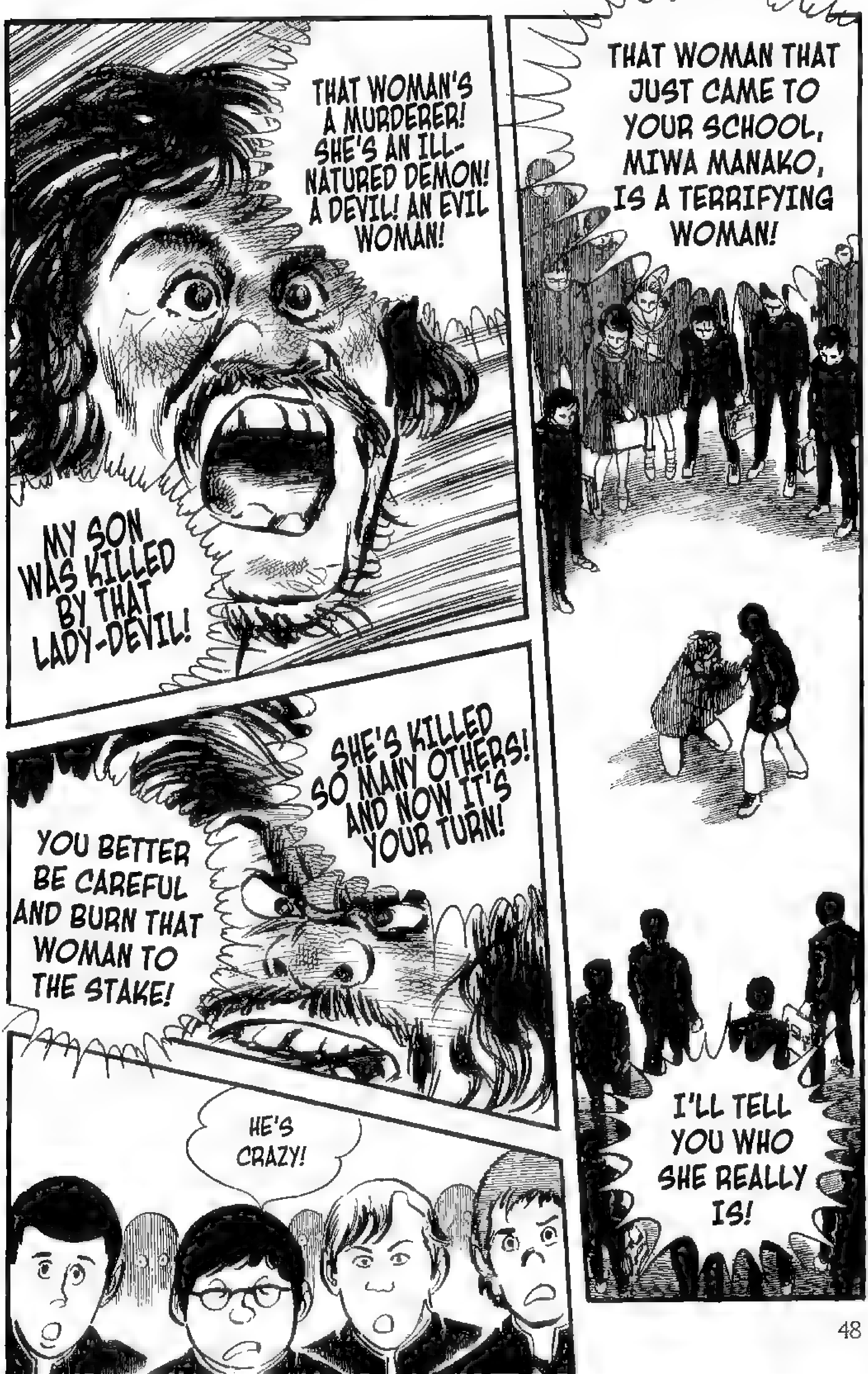


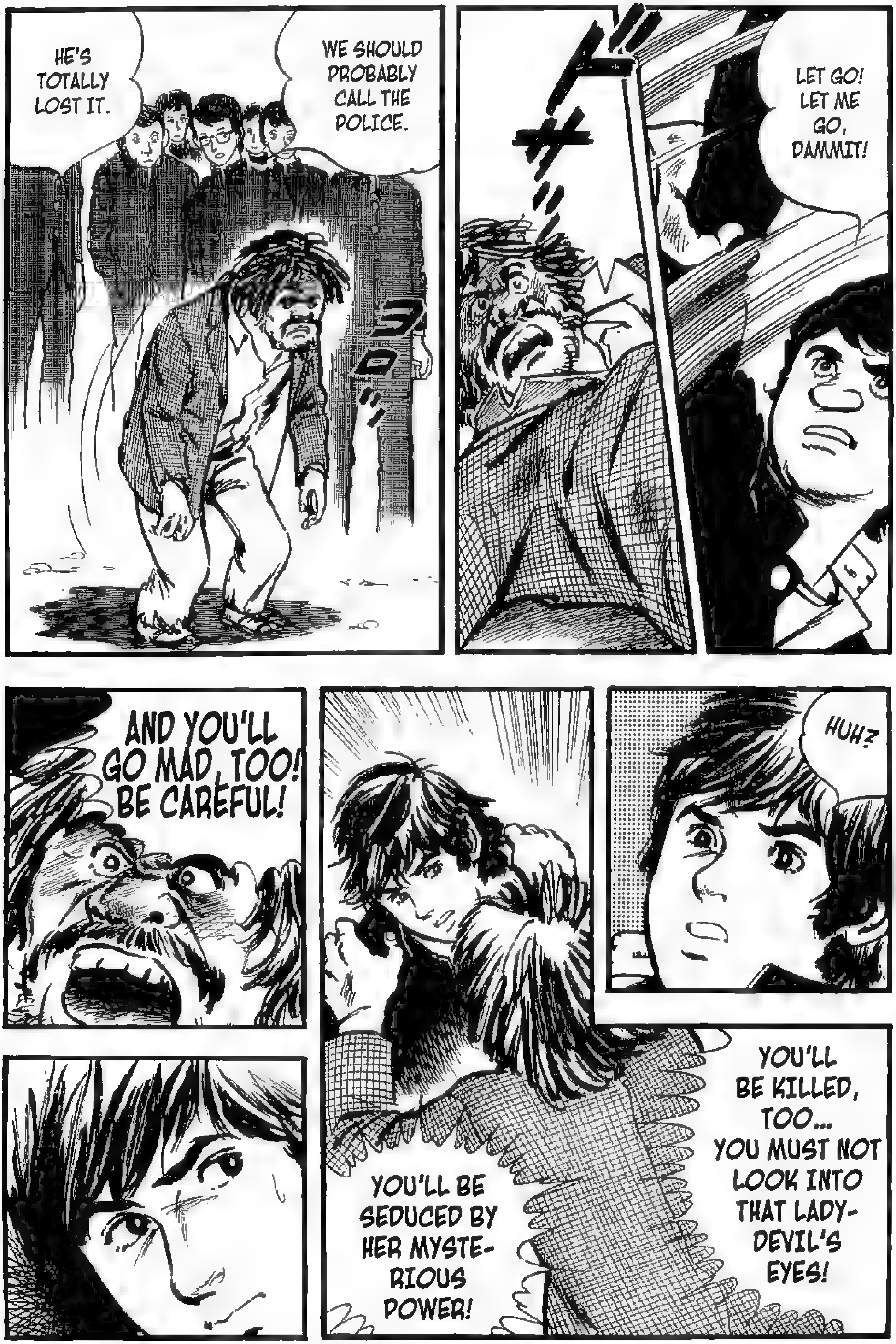
THAT DAY, AFTER SCHOOL ...

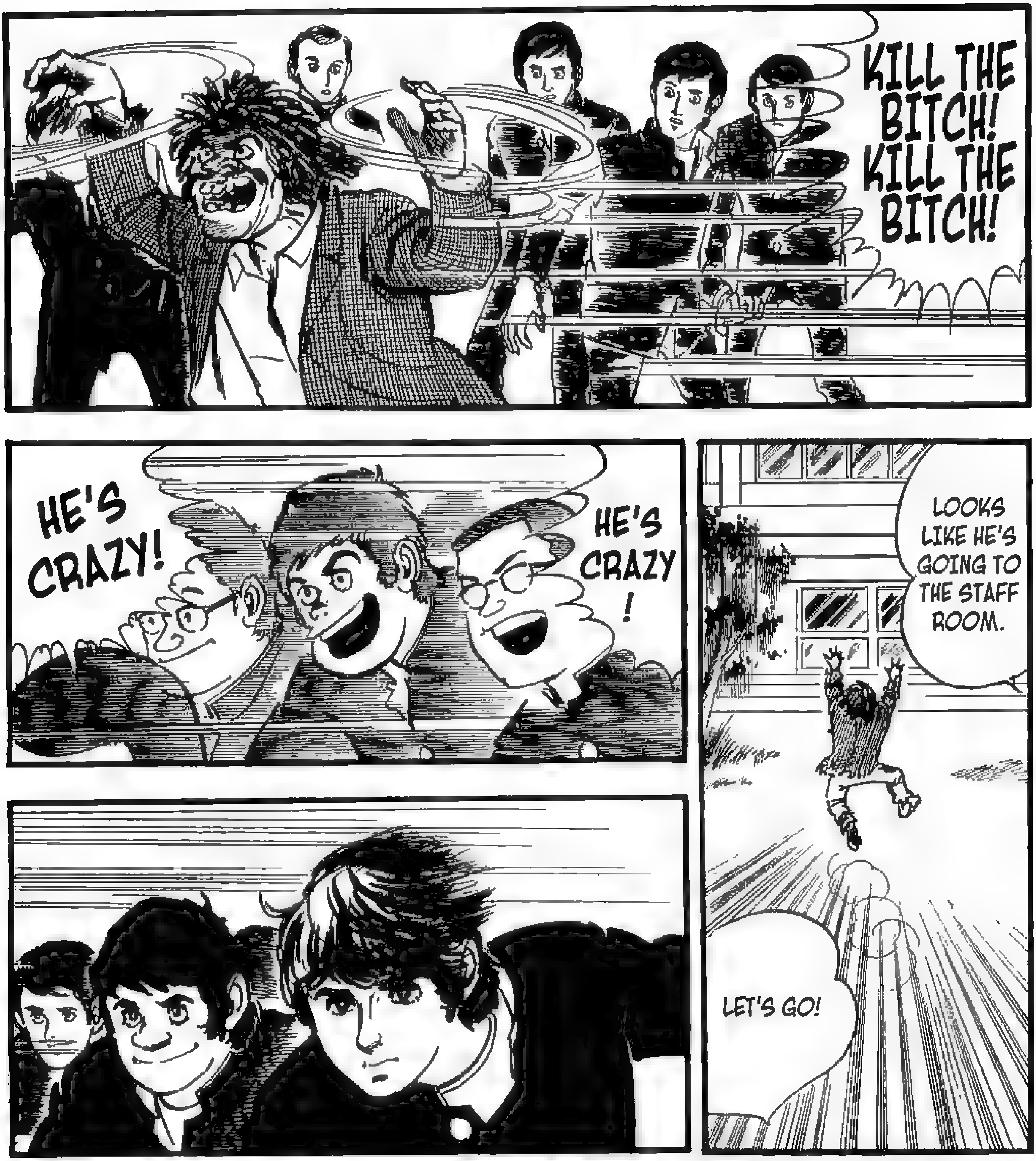

I TRUST MY SPIDER-SENSE... MISS MIWA IS NO ORDINARY PERSON...
THAT HOLLOW, SURREAL ATMOSPHERE, AND THOSE STRANGE, SHINING EYES THAT SEEMED TO TEAR APART MY SENSES...


WHAT WAS THAT, YU?
WHAT ABOUT MISS MIWA'S EYES?
N...NO, IT'S NOTHING. I JUST THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING WEIRD ABOUT THEM...
SOMETHING WEIRD?
HEY, YU, DON'T TELL ME YOU WERE DREAMING!
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, YOU WERE STANDING THERE, STARING INTO SPACE!
HEHEHE... I DON'T BLAME YOU, MISS MIWA DOES HAVE PRETTY NICE EYES...
HAHAHA-HAHA!

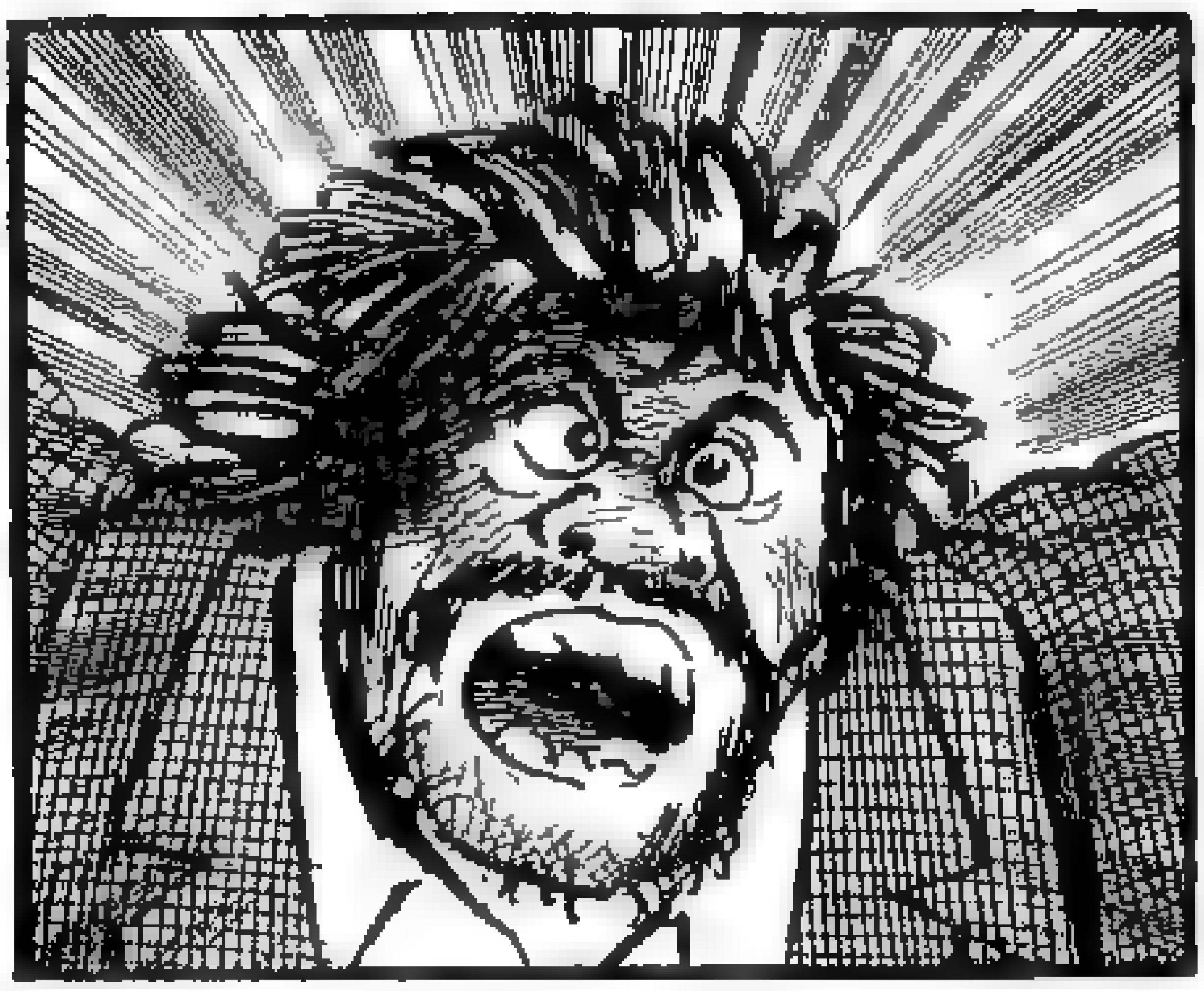

WHAT'S GOING ON? THERE'S SOMETHING BLOCKING THE WAY.
タッ タッ
LISTEN! LISTEN TO ME!
WHADDYA WANT!?


THAT WOMAN THAT JUST CAME TO YOUR SCHOOL, MIWA MANAKO, IS A TERRIFYING WOMAN!
I'LL TELL YOU WHO SHE REALLY IS!
THAT WOMAN'S A MURDERER! SHE'S AN ILL-NATURED DEMON! A DEVIL! AN EVIL WOMAN!
MY SON WAS KILLED BY THAT LADY-DEVIL!
SHE'S KILLED SO MANY OTHERS! AND NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!
YOU BETTER BE CAREFUL AND BURN THAT WOMAN TO THE STAKE!
HE'S CRAZY!

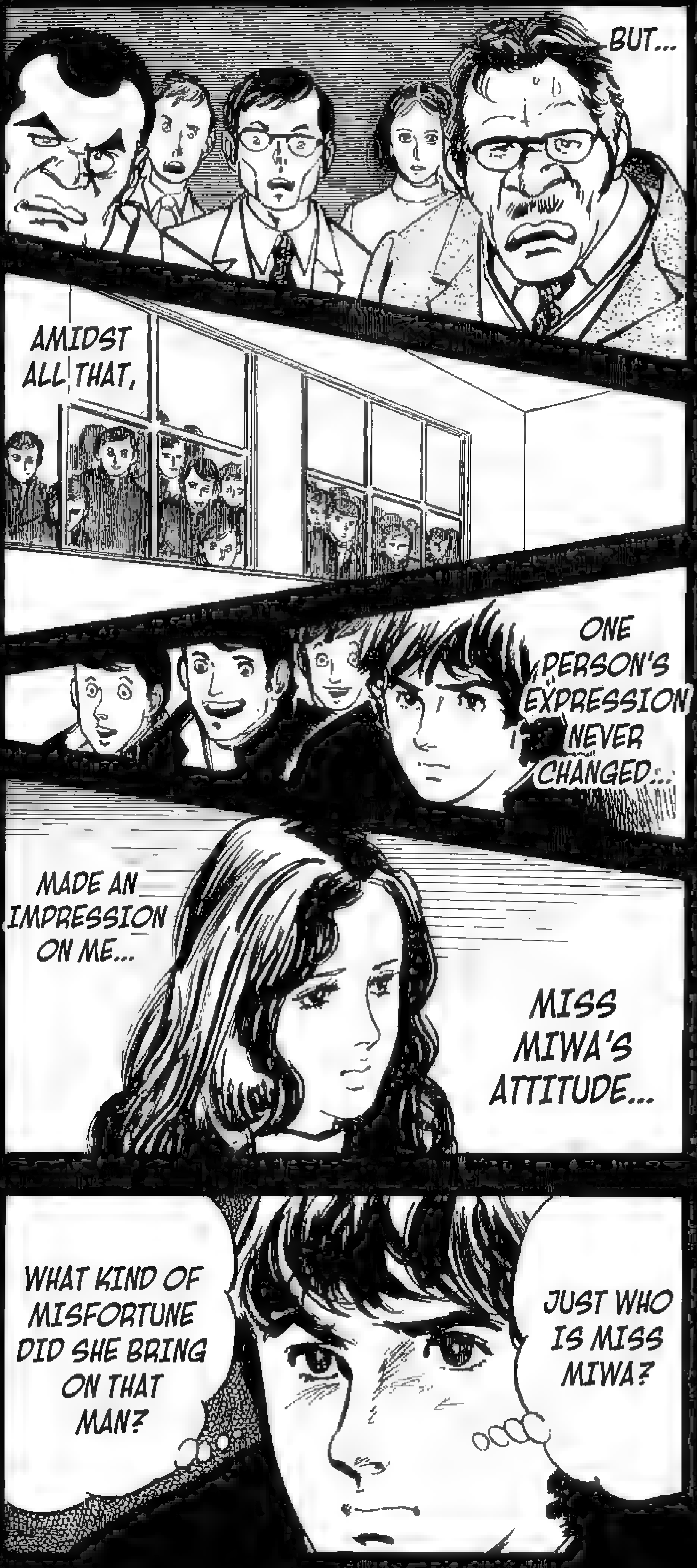

HE'S TOTALLY LOST IT.
WE SHOULD PROBABLY CALL THE POLICE.
LET GO! LET ME GO, DAMMIT!
AND YOU'LL GO MAD, TOO! BE CAREFUL!
HUH?
YOU'LL BE KILLED, TOO... YOU MUST NOT LOOK INTO THAT LADY-DEVIL'S EYES!
YOU'LL BE SEDUCED BY HER MYSTERIOUS POWER!

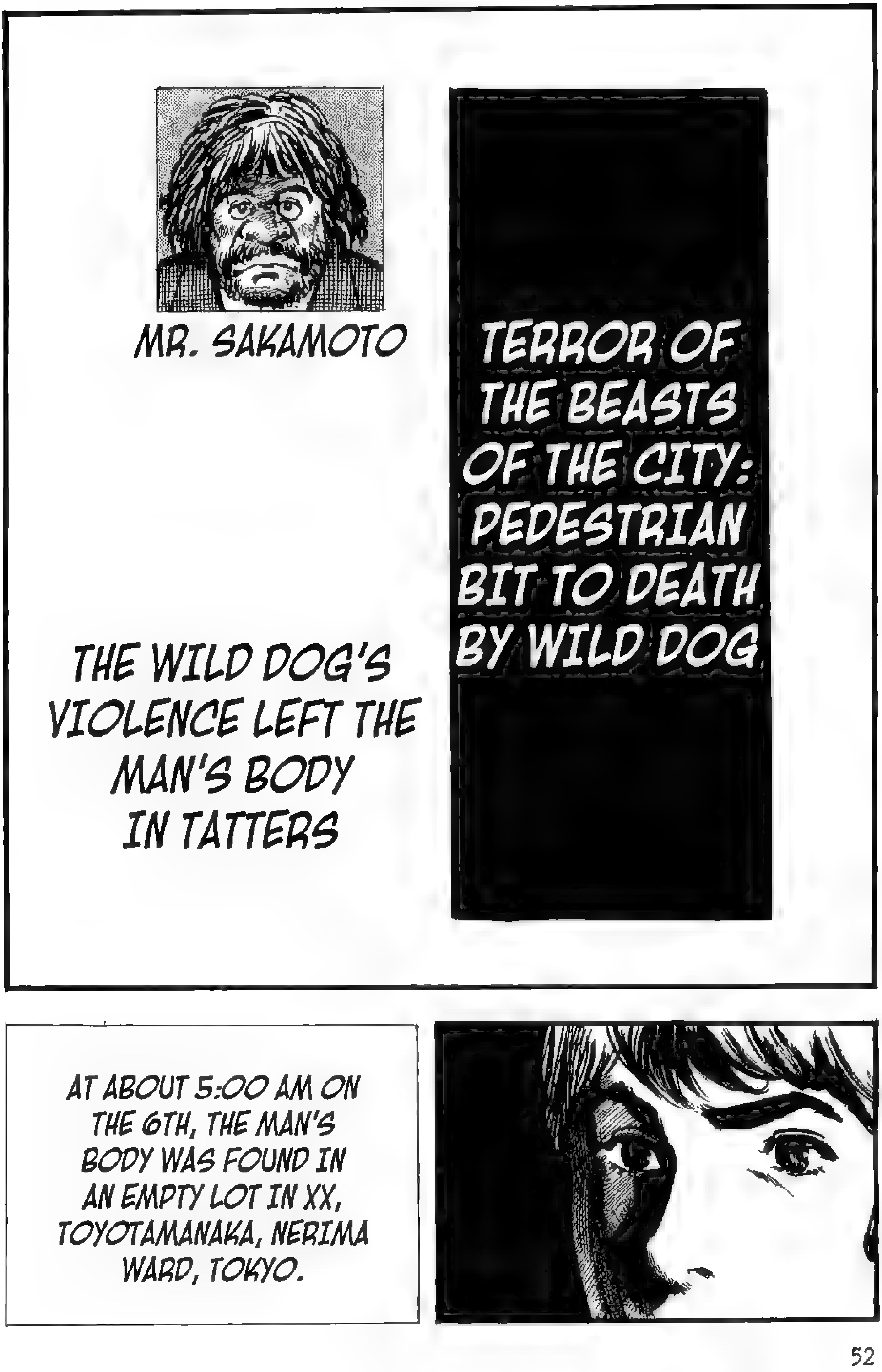

KILL THE BITCH! KILL THE BITCH!
HE'S CRAZY!
HE'S CRAZY!
LOOKS LIKE HE'S GOING TO THE STAFF ROOM.
LET'S GO!

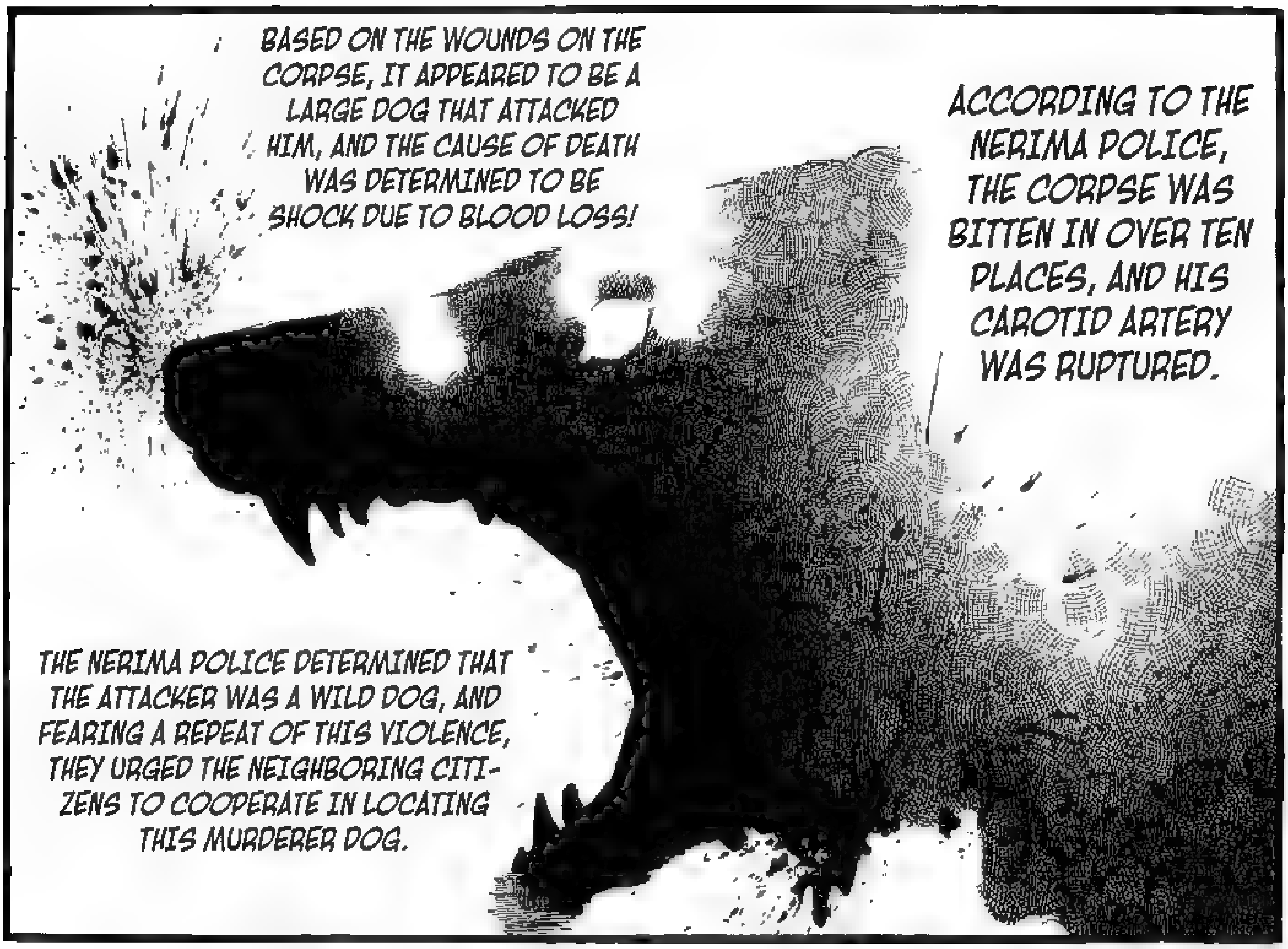
BUT THE SCREAMING MAN WHO BROKE INTO THE STAFF ROOM, WITH THE TEACHERS ALL STANDING AND THE STUDENTS ALL CROWDED AROUND THE WINDOW, BECAME THE BIGGEST UPROAR SINCE THE SCHOOL OPENED.

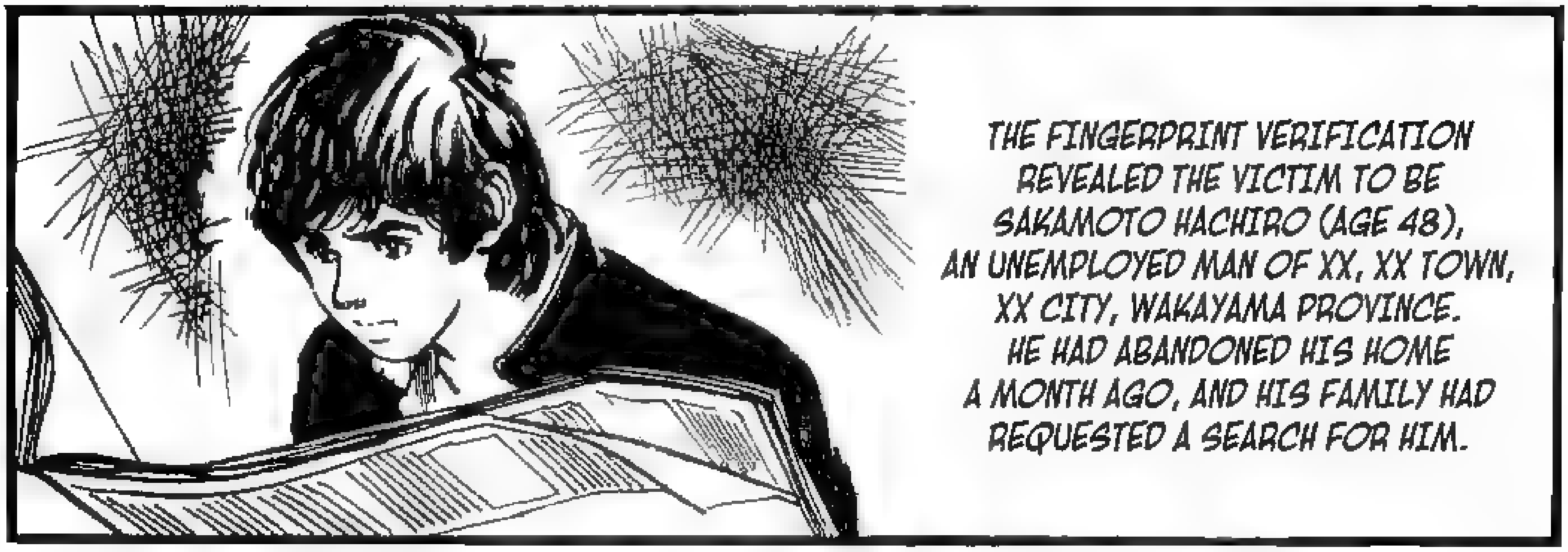


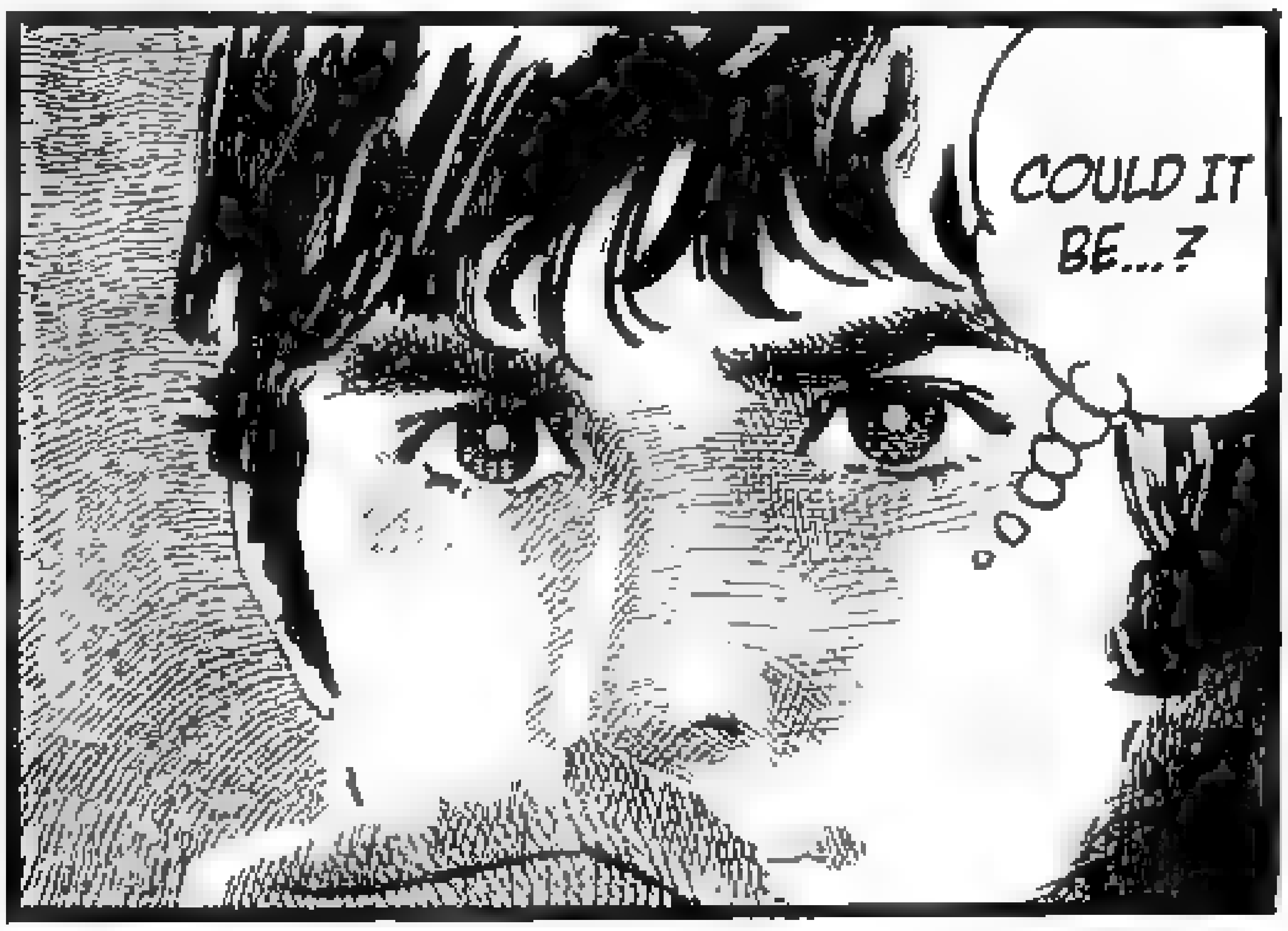
IN THE END, A COP CAR CAME AND TOOK HIM AWAY...

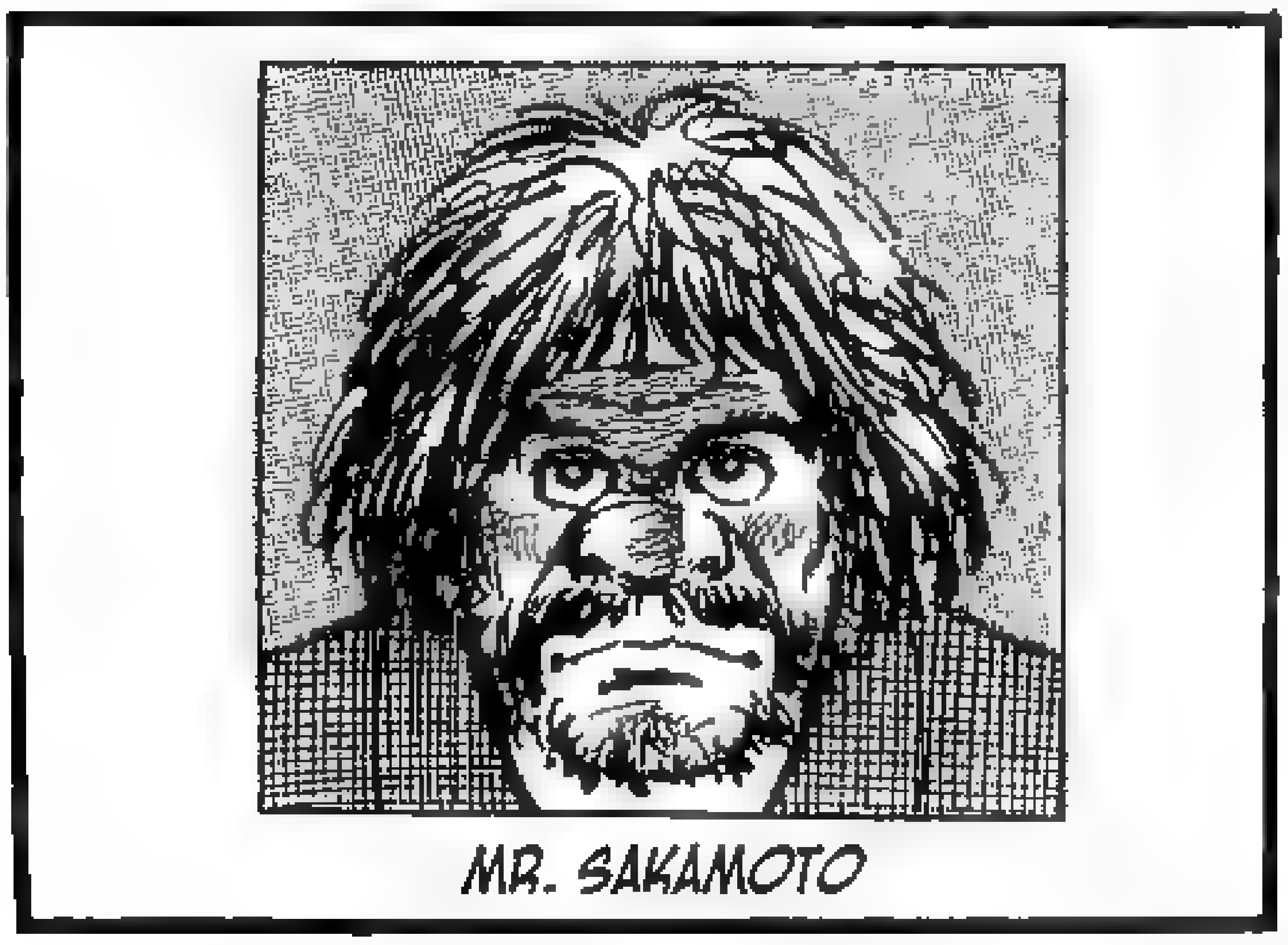

BUT...
AMIDST ALL THAT,
ONE PERSON'S EXPRESSION NEVER CHANGED...
MADE AN IMPRESSION ON ME...
MISS MIWA'S ATTITUDE...
JUST WHO IS MISS MIWA?
WHAT KIND OF MISFORTUNE DID SHE BRING ON THAT MAN?

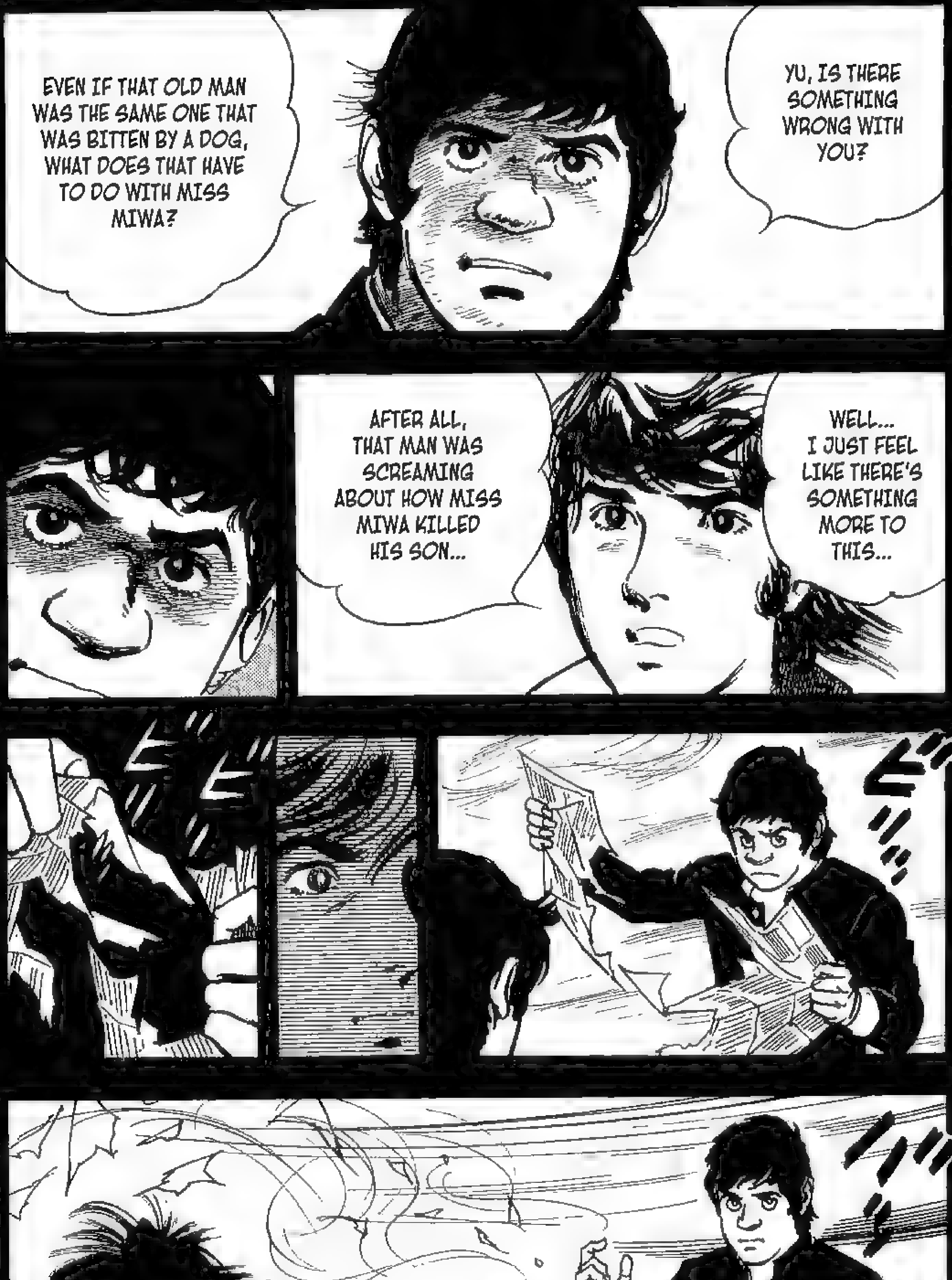

MR. SAKAMOTO
TERROR OF THE BEASTS OF THE CITY: PEDESTRIAN BIT TO DEATH BY WILD DOG
THE WILD DOG'S VIOLENCE LEFT THE MAN'S BODY IN TATTERS
AT ABOUT 5:00 AM ON THE 6TH, THE MAN'S BODY WAS FOUND IN AN EMPTY LOT IN XX, TOYOTAMANAKA, NERIMA WARD, TOKYO.

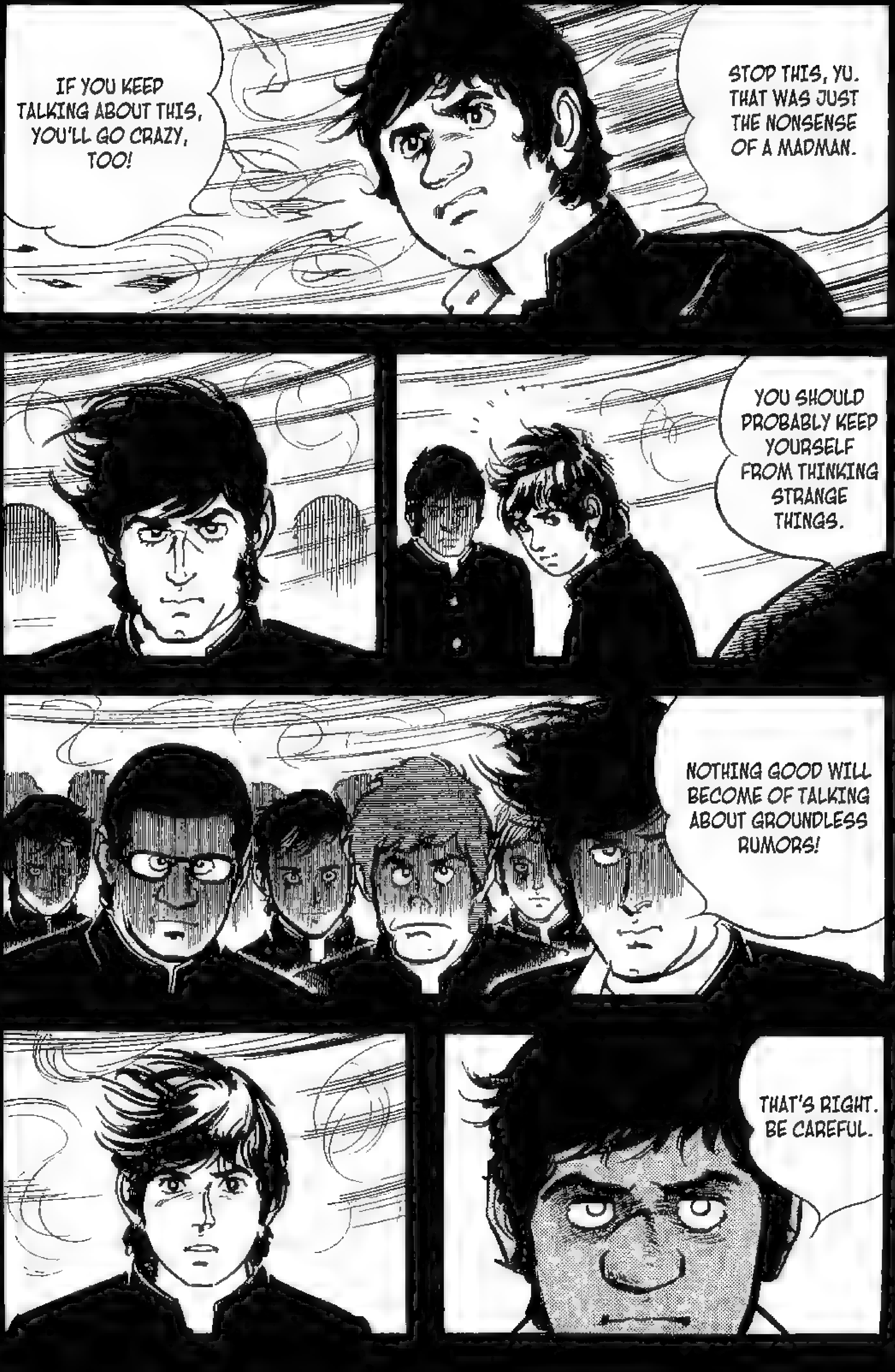

ACCORDING TO THE NERIMA POLICE, THE CORPSE WAS BITTEN IN OVER TEN PLACES, AND HIS CAROTID ARTERY WAS RUPTURED.
BASED ON THE WOUNDS ON THE CORPSE, IT APPEARED TO BE A LARGE DOG THAT ATTACKED HIM, AND THE CAUSE OF DEATH WAS DETERMINED TO BE SHOCK DUE TO BLOOD LOSS!
THE NERIMA POLICE DETERMINED THAT THE ATTACKER WAS A WILD DOG, AND FEARING A REPEAT OF THIS VIOLENCE, THEY URGED THE NEIGHBORING CITIZENS TO COOPERATE IN LOCATING THIS MURDERER DOG.


THE FINGERPRINT VERIFICATION REVEALED THE VICTIM TO BE SAKAMOTO HACHIRO (AGE 48), AN UNEMPLOYED MAN OF XX, XX TOWN, XX CITY, WAKAYAMA PROVINCE. HE HAD ABANDONED HIS HOME A MONTH AGO, AND HIS FAMILY HAD REQUESTED A SEARCH FOR HIM.


COULD IT BE...?


MR. SAKAMOTO


YU, IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU?
EVEN IF THAT OLD MAN WAS THE SAME ONE THAT WAS BITTEN BY A DOG, WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH MISS MIWA?
WELL... I JUST FEEL LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING MORE TO THIS...
AFTER ALL, THAT MAN WAS SCREAMING ABOUT HOW MISS MIWA KILLED HIS SON...


STOP THIS, YU. THAT WAS JUST THE NONSENSE OF A MADMAN.
IF YOU KEEP TALKING ABOUT THIS, YOU'LL GO CRAZY, TOO!
YOU SHOULD PROBABLY KEEP YOURSELF FROM THINKING STRANGE THINGS.
NOTHING GOOD WILL BECOME OF TALKING ABOUT GROUNDLESS RUMORS!
THAT'S RIGHT. BE CAREFUL.

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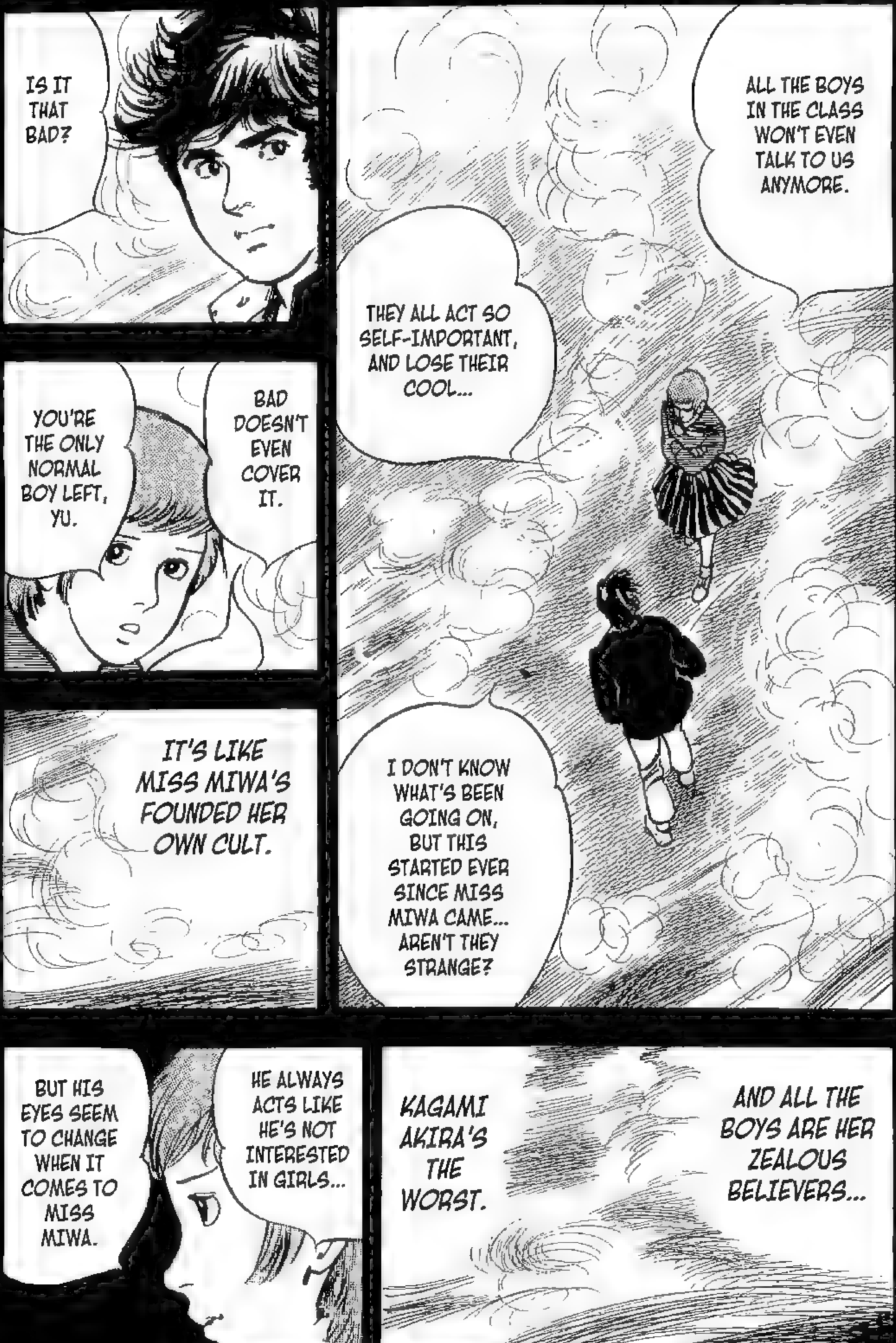
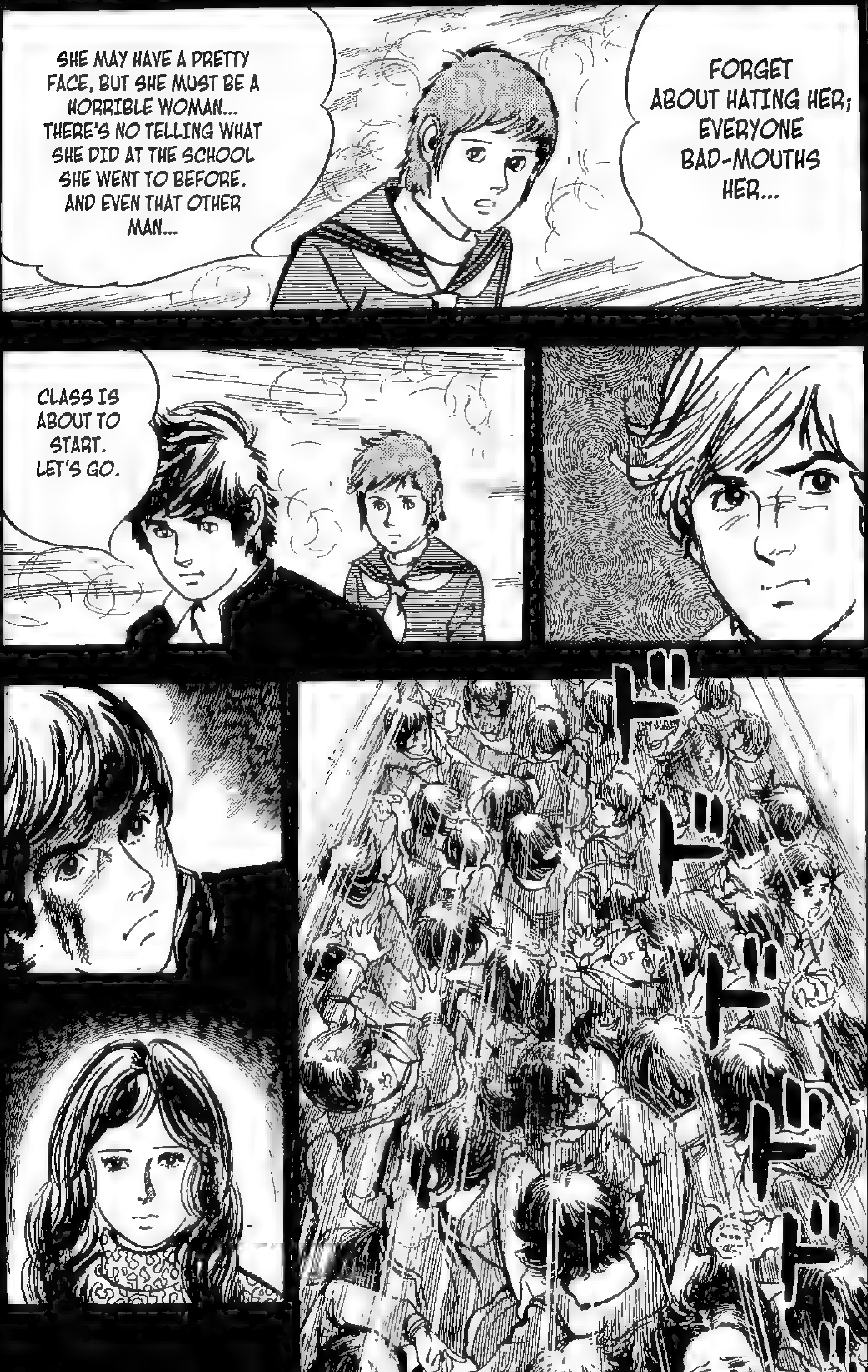
WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM...?
THEY WOULD NEVER HAVE TALKED TO ME LIKE THAT BEFORE...
EVEN ARAKI...
I HEARD WHAT'S GOING ON...
THERE REALLY MUST BE SOMETHING WRONG WITH THEM. HAVE THEY ALL GONE CRAZY AS A GROUP?


ALL THE BOYS IN THE CLASS WON'T EVEN TALK TO US ANYMORE.
THEY ALL ACT SO SELF-IMPORTANT, AND LOSE THEIR COOL...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON, BUT THIS STARTED EVER SINCE MISS MIWA CAME... AREN'T THEY STRANGE?
IS IT THAT BAD?
BAD DOESN'T EVEN COVER IT.
YOU'RE THE ONLY NORMAL BOY LEFT, YU.
IT'S LIKE MISS MIWA'S FOUNDED HER OWN CULT.
AND ALL THE BOYS ARE HER ZEALOUS BELIEVERS...
KAGAMI AKIRA'S THE WORST.
HE ALWAYS ACTS LIKE HE'S NOT INTERESTED IN GIRLS...
BUT HIS EYES SEEM TO CHANGE WHEN IT COMES TO MISS MIWA.


FORGET ABOUT HATING HER; EVERYONE BAD-MOUTHS HER...
SHE MAY HAVE A PRETTY FACE, BUT SHE MUST BE A HORRIBLE WOMAN... THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT SHE DID AT THE SCHOOL SHE WENT TO BEFORE. AND EVEN THAT OTHER MAN...
CLASS IS ABOUT TO START. LET'S GO.
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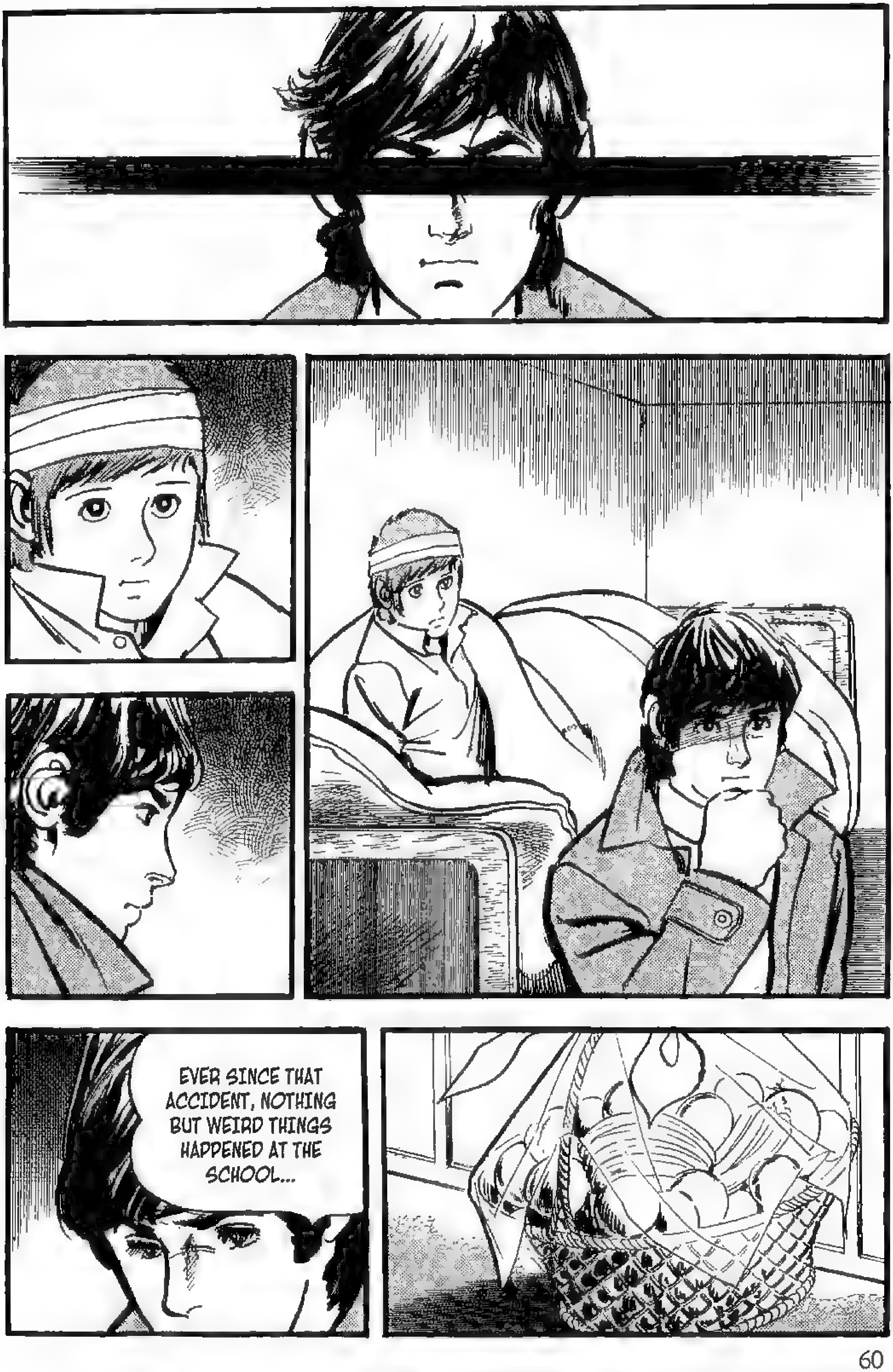
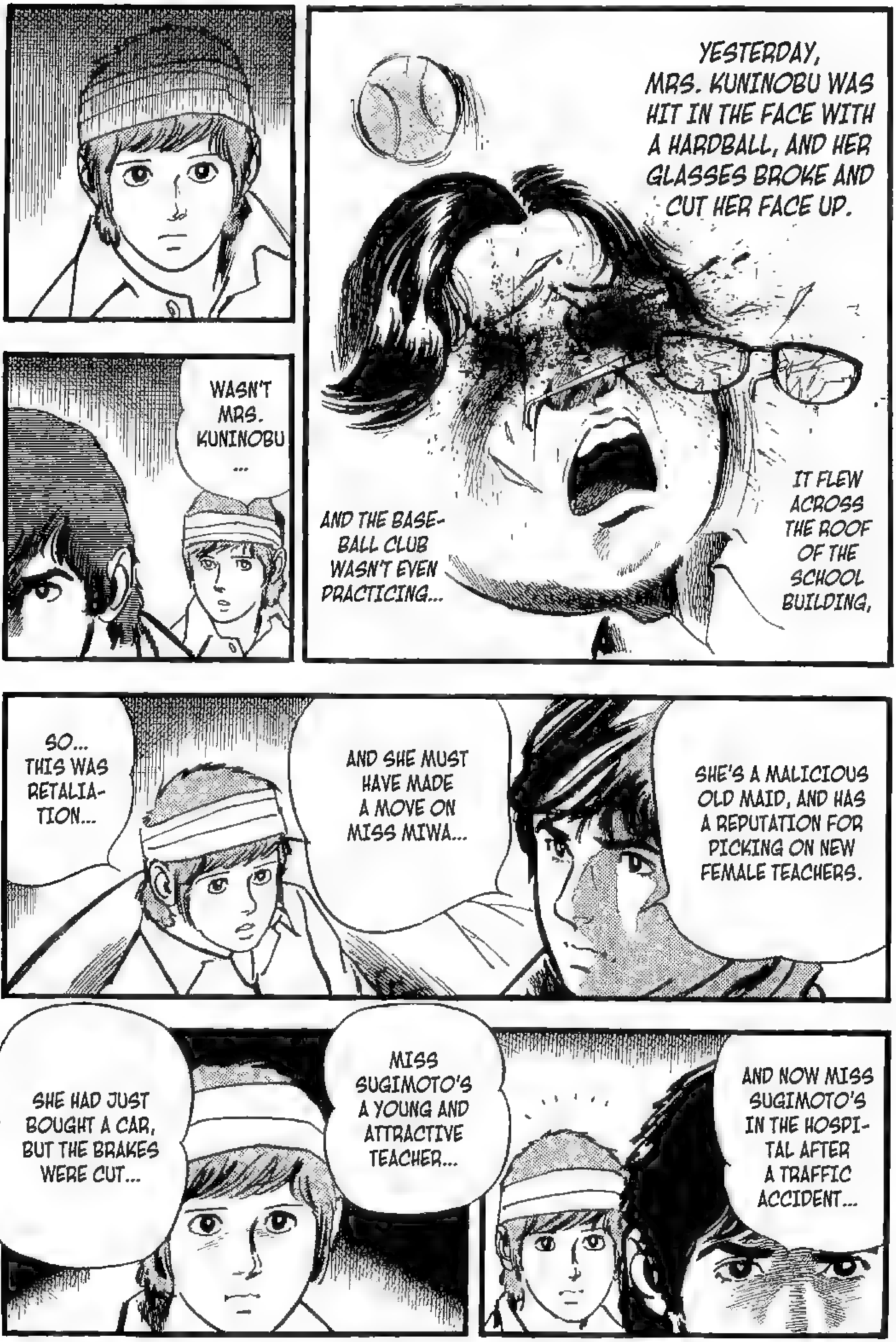
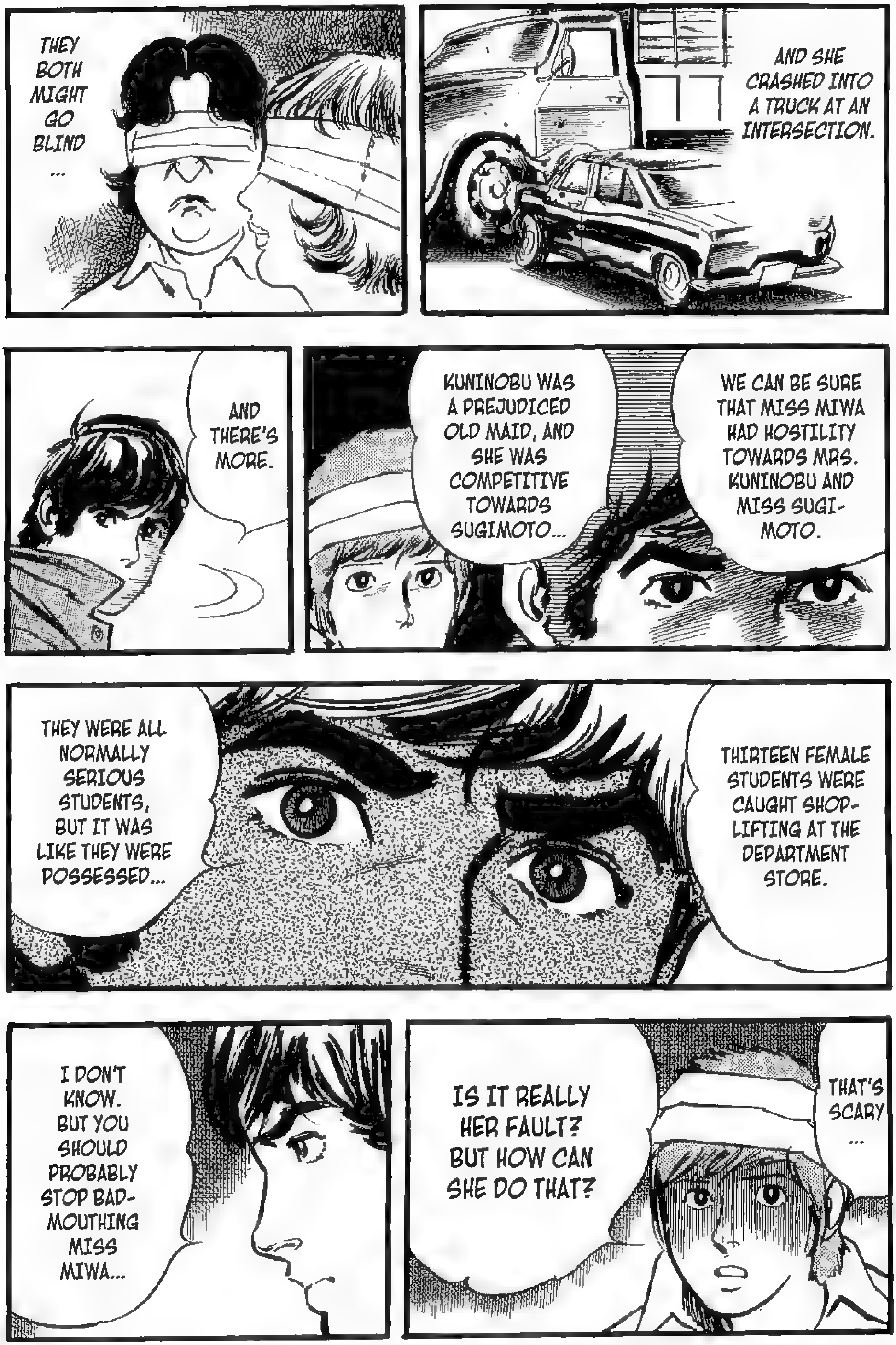
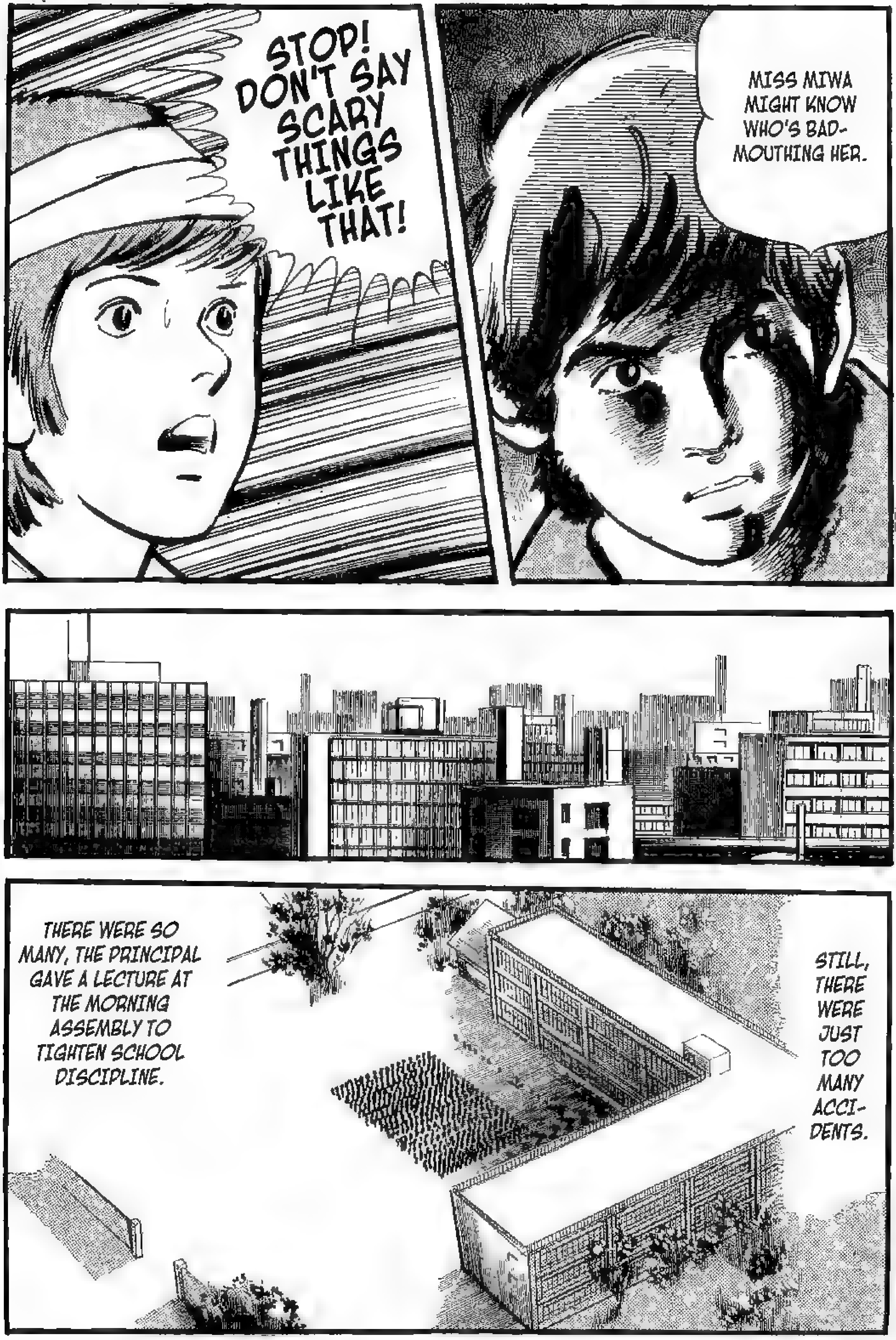
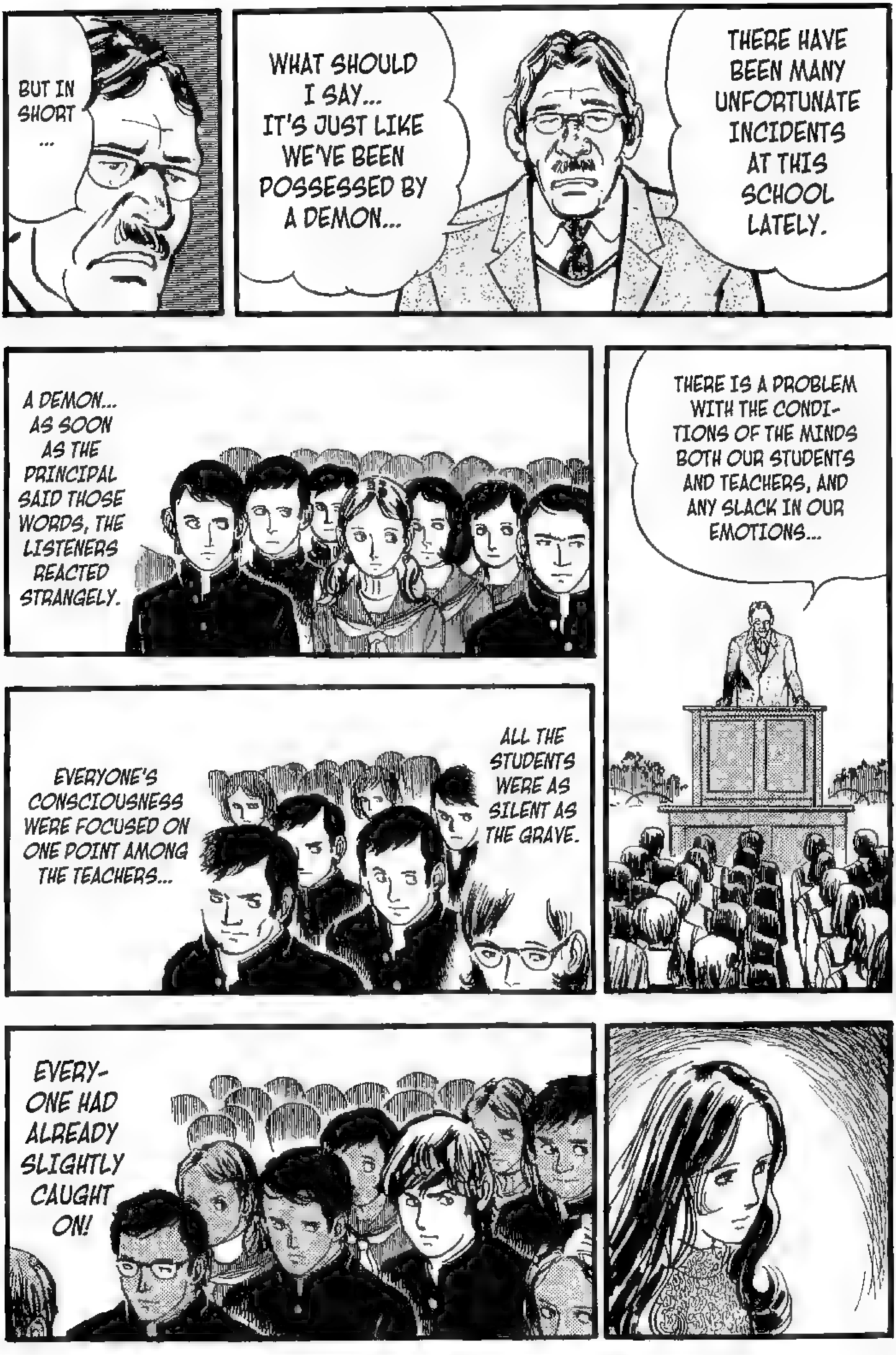
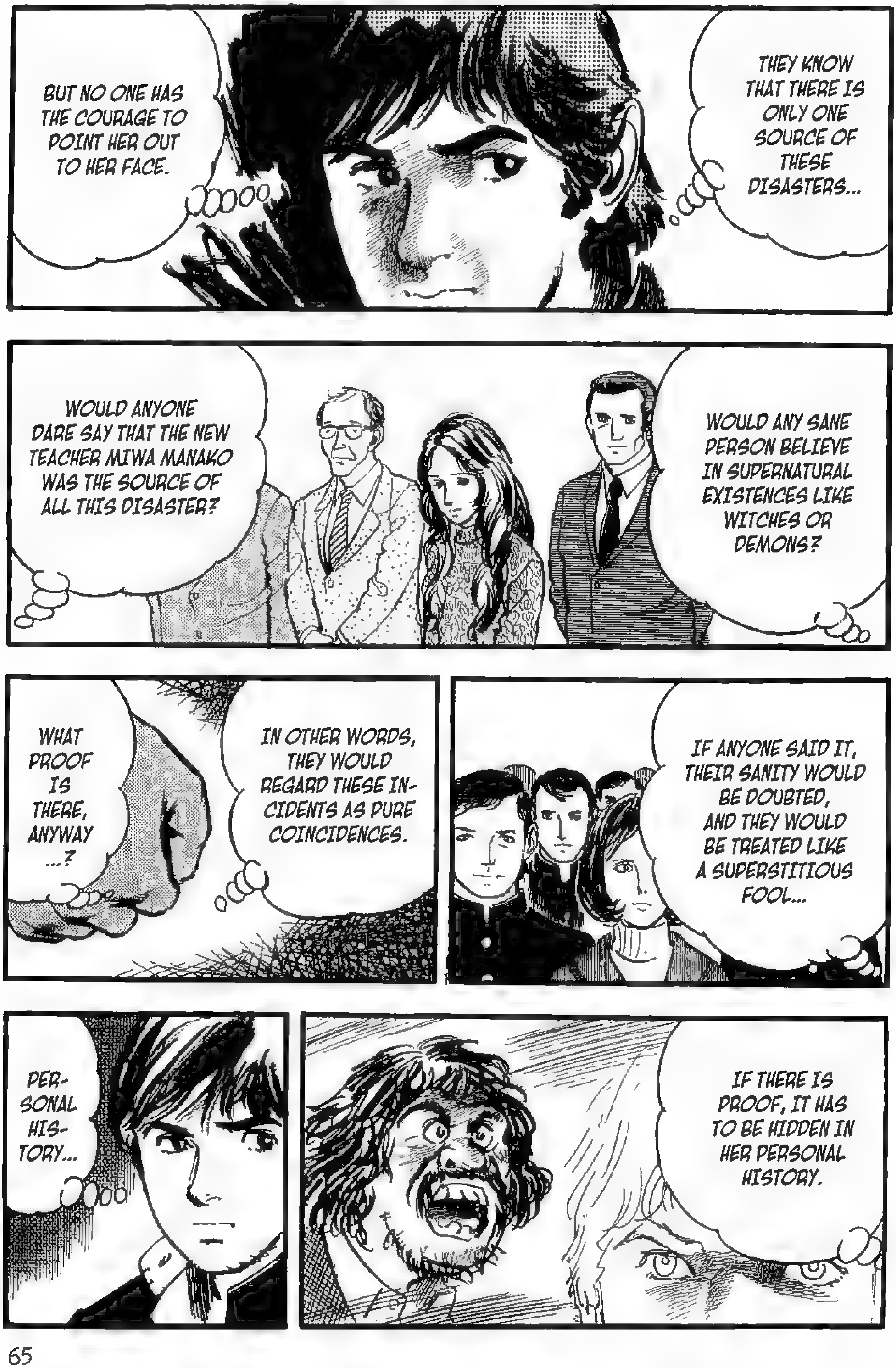

EVER SINCE THAT ACCIDENT, NOTHING BUT WEIRD THINGS HAPPENED AT THE SCHOOL...

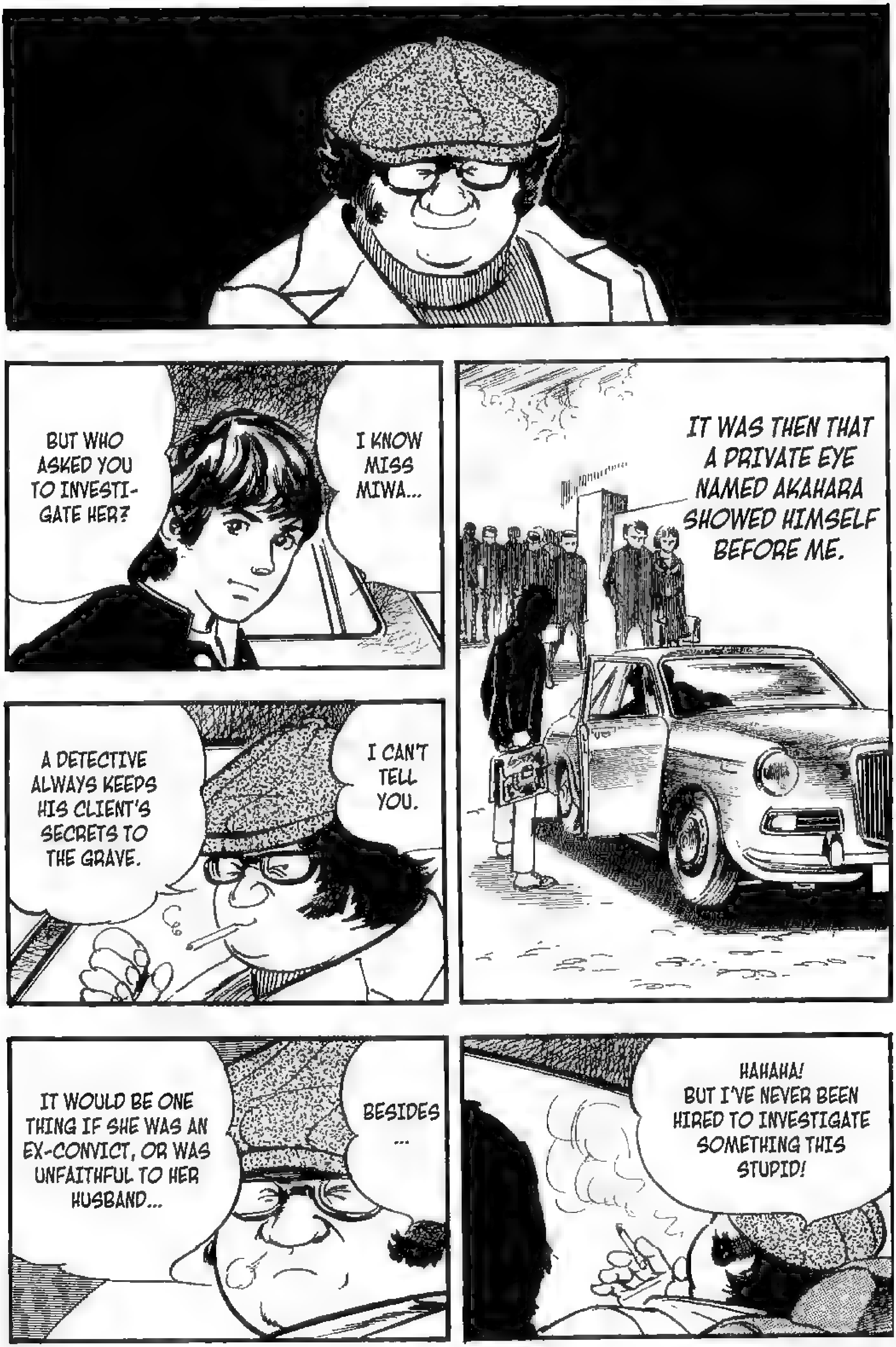

YESTERDAY, MRS. KUNINOBU WAS HIT IN THE FACE WITH A HARDBALL, AND HER GLASSES BROKE AND CUT HER FACE UP.
IT FLEW ACROSS THE ROOF OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING,
AND THE BASEBALL CLUB WASN'T EVEN PRACTICING...
WASN'T MRS. KUNINOBU ...
SHE'S A MALICIOUS OLD MAID, AND HAS A REPUTATION FOR PICKING ON NEW FEMALE TEACHERS.
AND SHE MUST HAVE MADE A MOVE ON MISS MIWA...
SO... THIS WAS RETALIATION...
AND NOW MISS SUGIMOTO'S IN THE HOSPITAL AFTER A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT...
MISS SUGIMOTO'S A YOUNG AND ATTRACTIVE TEACHER...
SHE HAD JUST BOUGHT A CAR, BUT THE BRAKES WERE CUT...

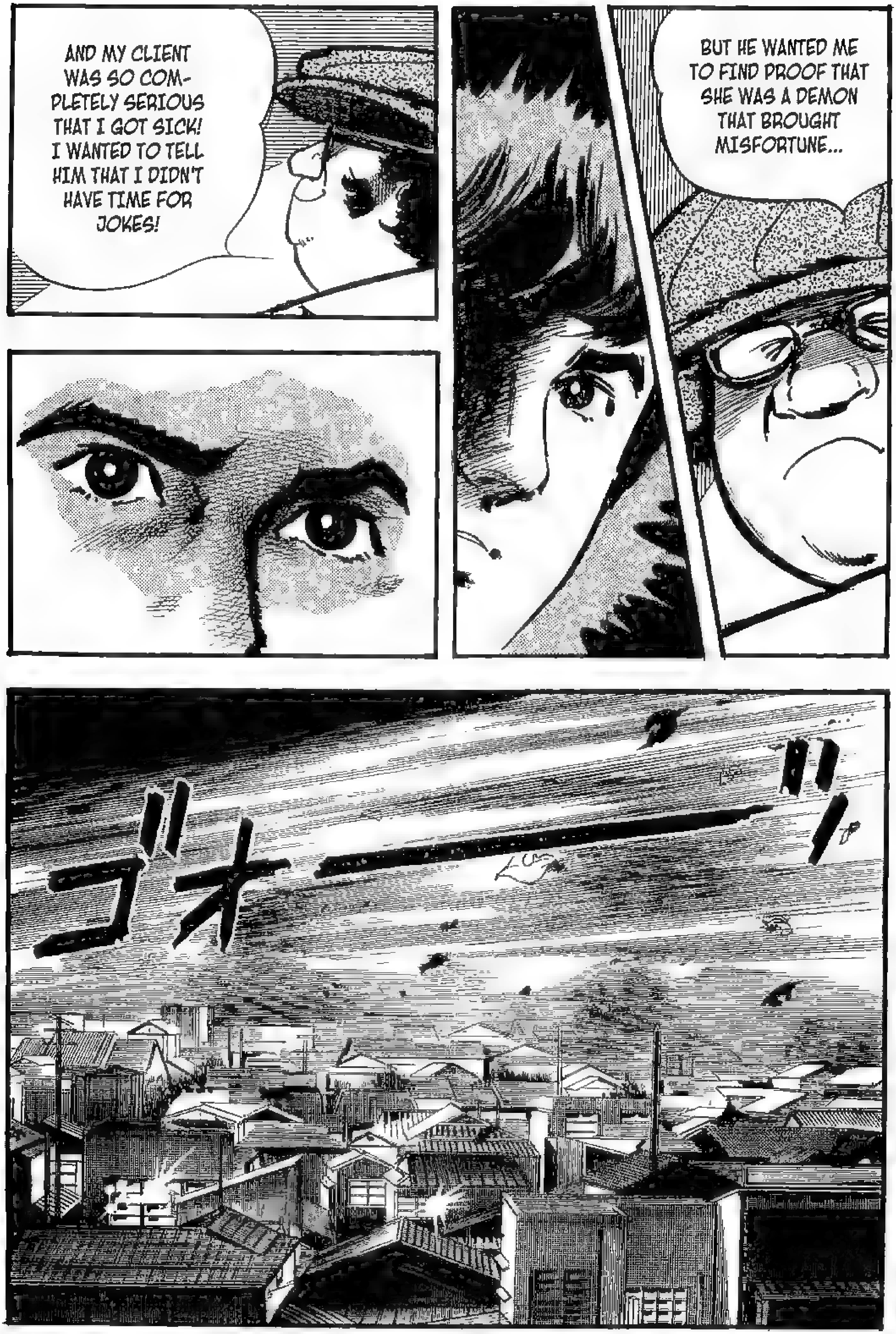

AND SHE CRASHED INTO A TRUCK AT AN INTERSECTION.
THEY BOTH MIGHT GO BLIND ...
WE CAN BE SURE THAT MISS MIWA HAD HOSTILITY TOWARDS MRS. KUNINOBU AND MISS SUGIMOTO.
KUNINOBU WAS A PREJUDICED OLD MAID, AND SHE WAS COMPETITIVE TOWARDS SUGIMOTO...
AND THERE'S MORE.
THIRTEEN FEMALE STUDENTS WERE CAUGHT SHOPLIFTING AT THE DEPARTMENT STORE.
THEY WERE ALL NORMALLY SERIOUS STUDENTS, BUT IT WAS LIKE THEY WERE POSSESSED...
THAT'S SCARY ...
IS IT REALLY HER FAULT? BUT HOW CAN SHE DO THAT?
I DON'T KNOW. BUT YOU SHOULD PROBABLY STOP BAD-MOUTHING MISS MIWA...


MISS MIWA MIGHT KNOW WHO'S BAD-MOUTHING HER.
STOP! DON'T SAY SCARY THINGS LIKE THAT!
STILL, THERE WERE JUST TOO MANY ACCIDENTS.
THERE WERE SO MANY, THE PRINCIPAL GAVE A LECTURE AT THE MORNING ASSEMBLY TO TIGHTEN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.


THERE HAVE BEEN MANY UNFORTUNATE INCIDENTS AT THIS SCHOOL LATELY.
WHAT SHOULD I SAY... IT'S JUST LIKE WE'VE BEEN POSSESSED BY A DEMON...
BUT IN SHORT ...
THERE IS A PROBLEM WITH THE CONDITIONS OF THE MINDS BOTH OUR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, AND ANY SLACK IN OUR EMOTIONS...
A DEMON... AS SOON AS THE PRINCIPAL SAID THOSE WORDS, THE LISTENERS REACTED STRANGELY.
ALL THE STUDENTS WERE AS SILENT AS THE GRAVE.
EVERYONE'S CONSCIOUSNESS WERE FOCUSED ON ONE POINT AMONG THE TEACHERS...
EVERYONE HAD ALREADY SLIGHTLY CAUGHT ON!


THEY KNOW THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE SOURCE OF THESE DISASTERS...
BUT NO ONE HAS THE COURAGE TO POINT HER OUT TO HER FACE.
WOULD ANY SANE PERSON BELIEVE IN SUPERNATURAL EXISTENCES LIKE WITCHES OR DEMONS?
WOULD ANYONE DARE SAY THAT THE NEW TEACHER MIWA MANAKO WAS THE SOURCE OF ALL THIS DISASTER?
IF ANYONE SAID IT, THEIR SANITY WOULD BE DOUBTED, AND THEY WOULD BE TREATED LIKE A SUPERSTITIOUS FOOL...
IN OTHER WORDS, THEY WOULD REGARD THESE INCIDENTS AS PURE COINCIDENCES.
WHAT PROOF IS THERE, ANYWAY ...?
IF THERE IS PROOF, IT HAS TO BE HIDDEN IN HER PERSONAL HISTORY.
PERSONAL HISTORY...


IT WAS THEN THAT A PRIVATE EYE NAMED AKAHARA SHOWED HIMSELF BEFORE ME.
I KNOW MISS MIWA...
BUT WHO ASKED YOU TO INVESTIGATE HER?
I CAN'T TELL YOU.
A DETECTIVE ALWAYS KEEPS HIS CLIENT'S SECRETS TO THE GRAVE.
HAHAHA! BUT I'VE NEVER BEEN HIRED TO INVESTIGATE SOMETHING THIS STUPID!
BESIDES...
IT WOULD BE ONE THING IF SHE WAS AN EX-CONVICT, OR WAS UNFAITHFUL TO HER HUSBAND...


AND MY CLIENT WAS SO COMPLETELY SERIOUS THAT I GOT SICK! I WANTED TO TELL HIM THAT I DIDN'T HAVE TIME FOR JOKES!
BUT HE WANTED ME TO FIND PROOF THAT SHE WAS A DEMON THAT BROUGHT MISFORTUNE...
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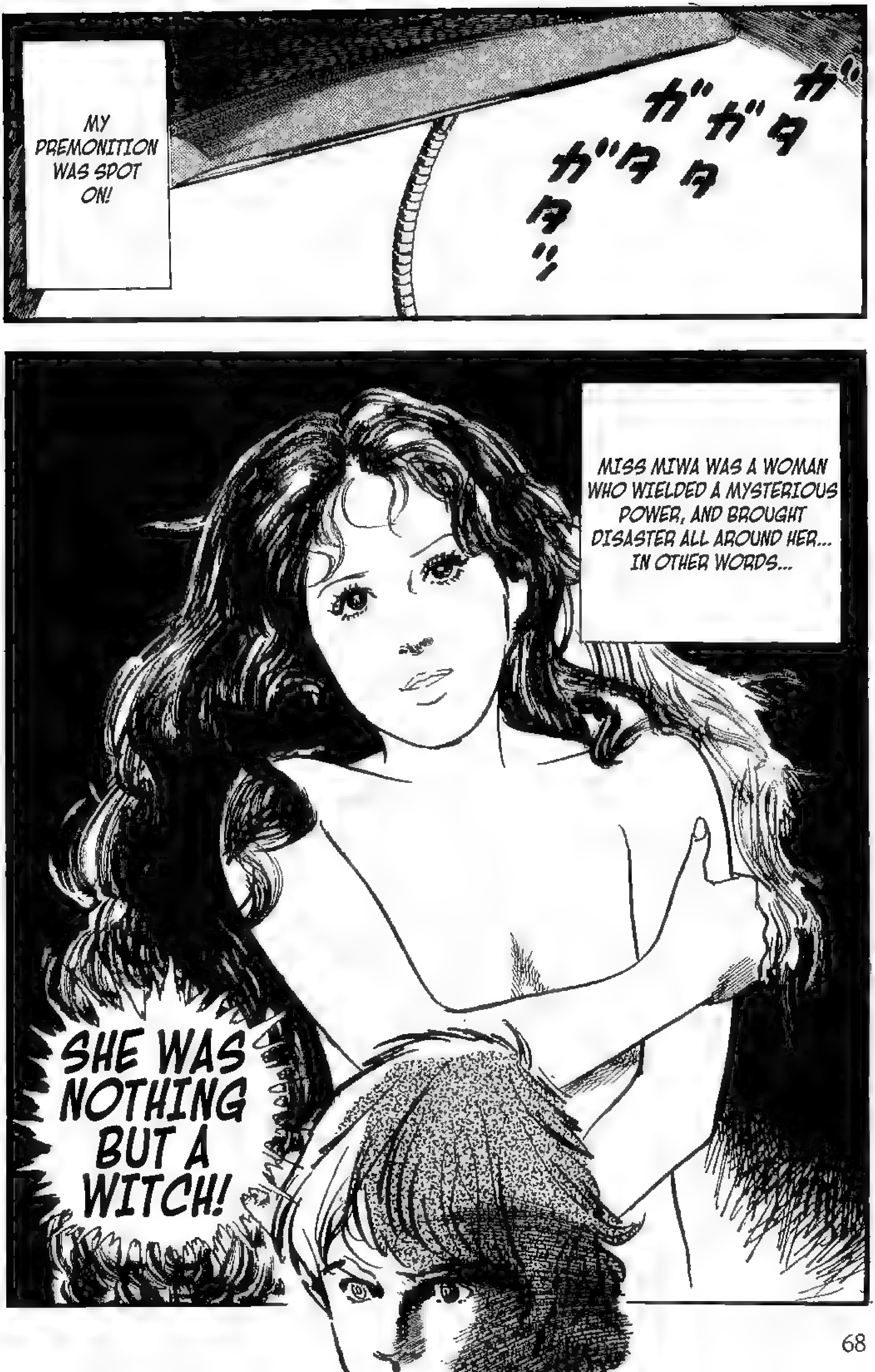
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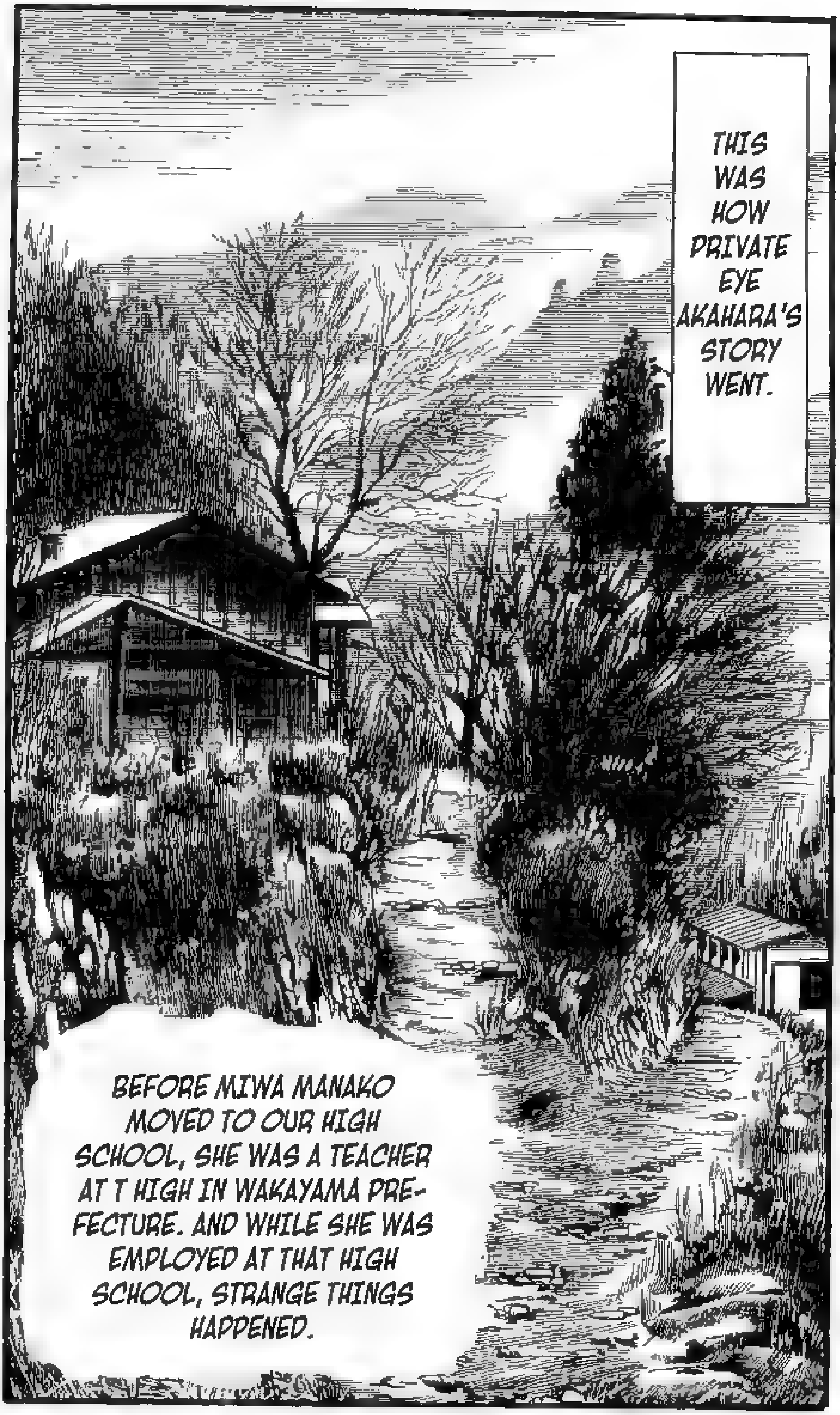
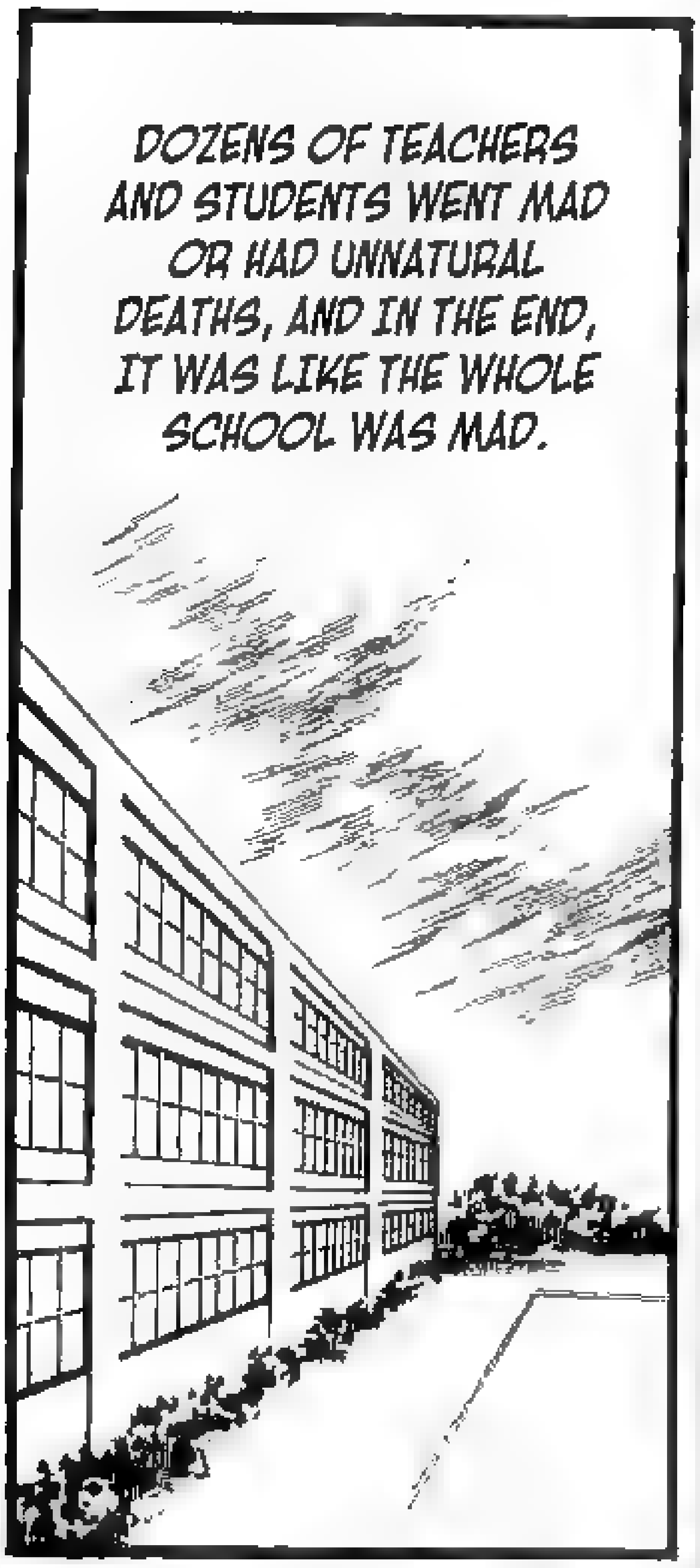
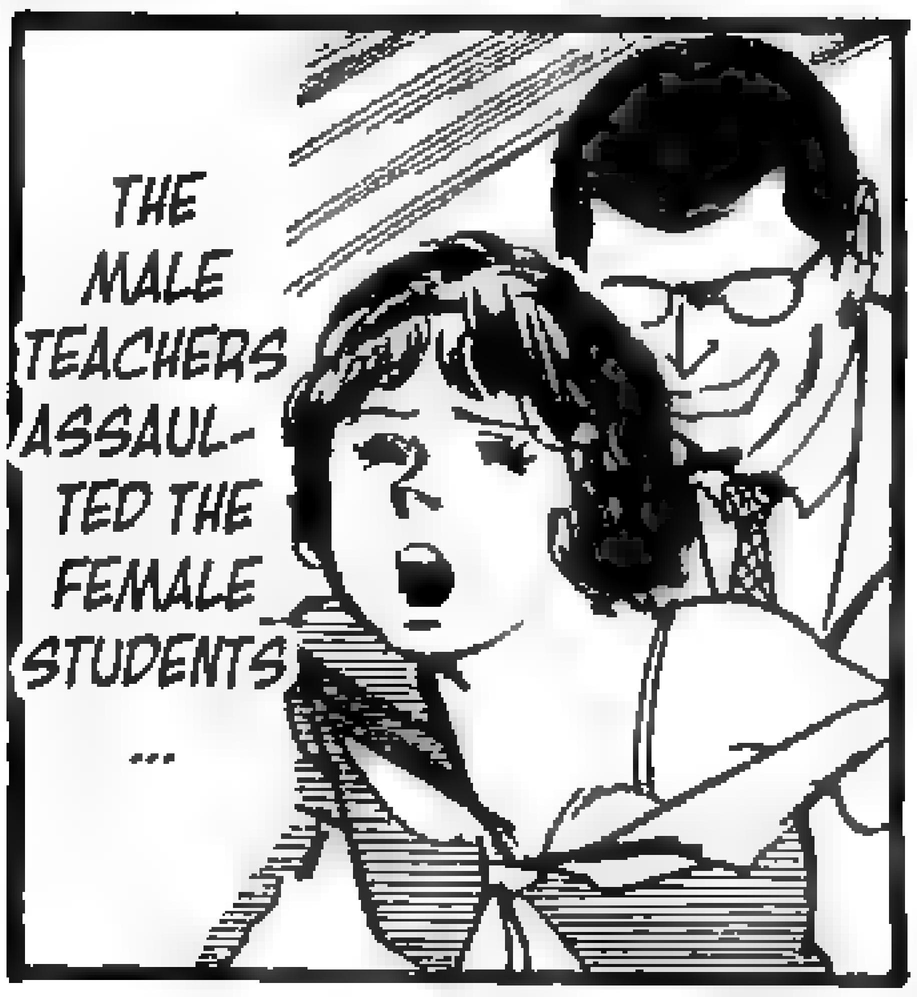
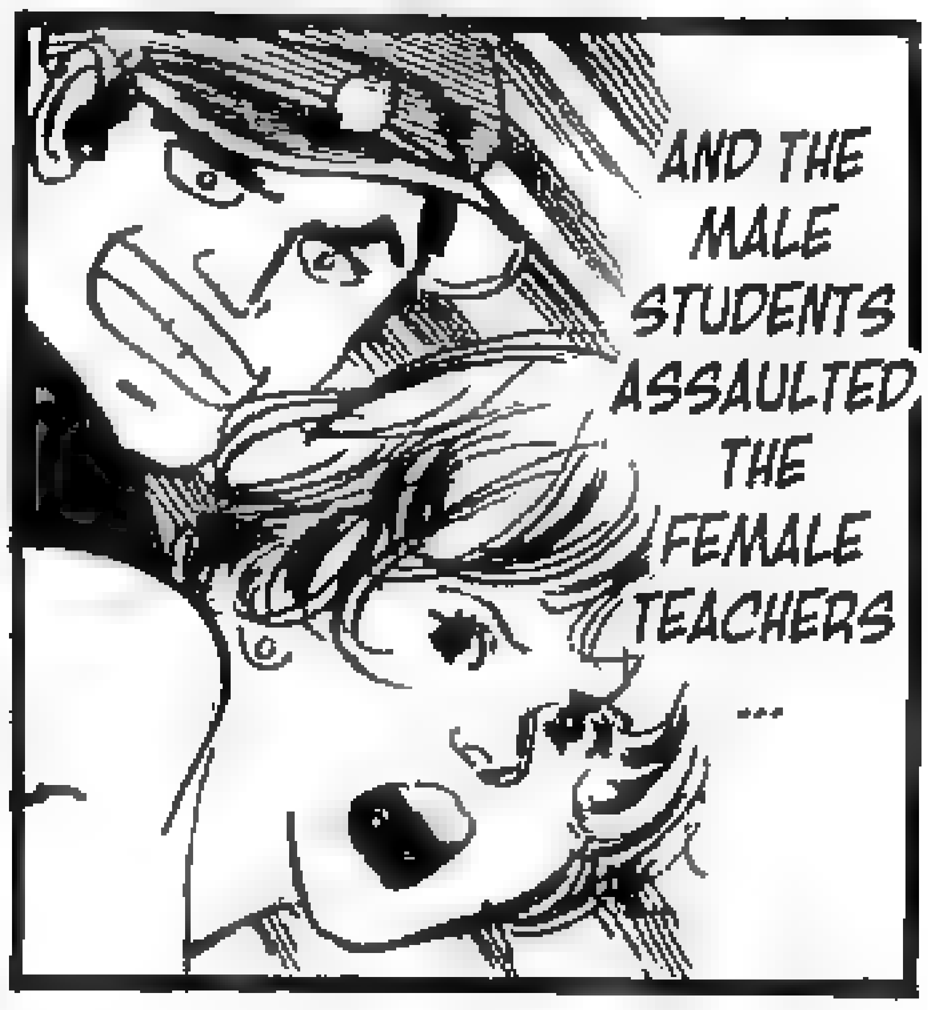
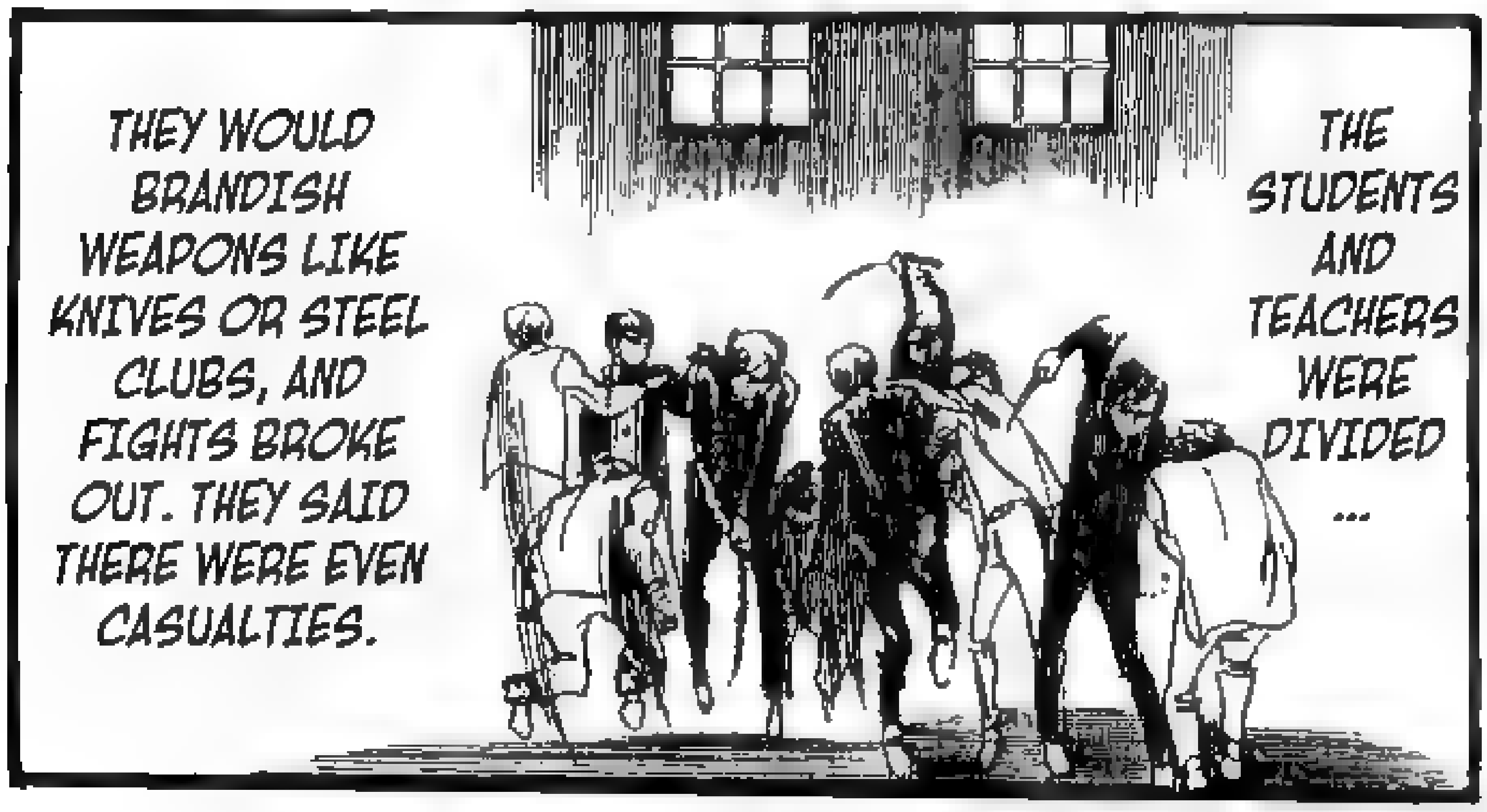
MY PREMONITION WAS SPOT ON!
MISS MIWA WAS A WOMAN WHO WIELDED A MYSTERIOUS POWER, AND BROUGHT DISASTER ALL AROUND HER... IN OTHER WORDS...
SHE WAS NOTHING BUT A WITCH!

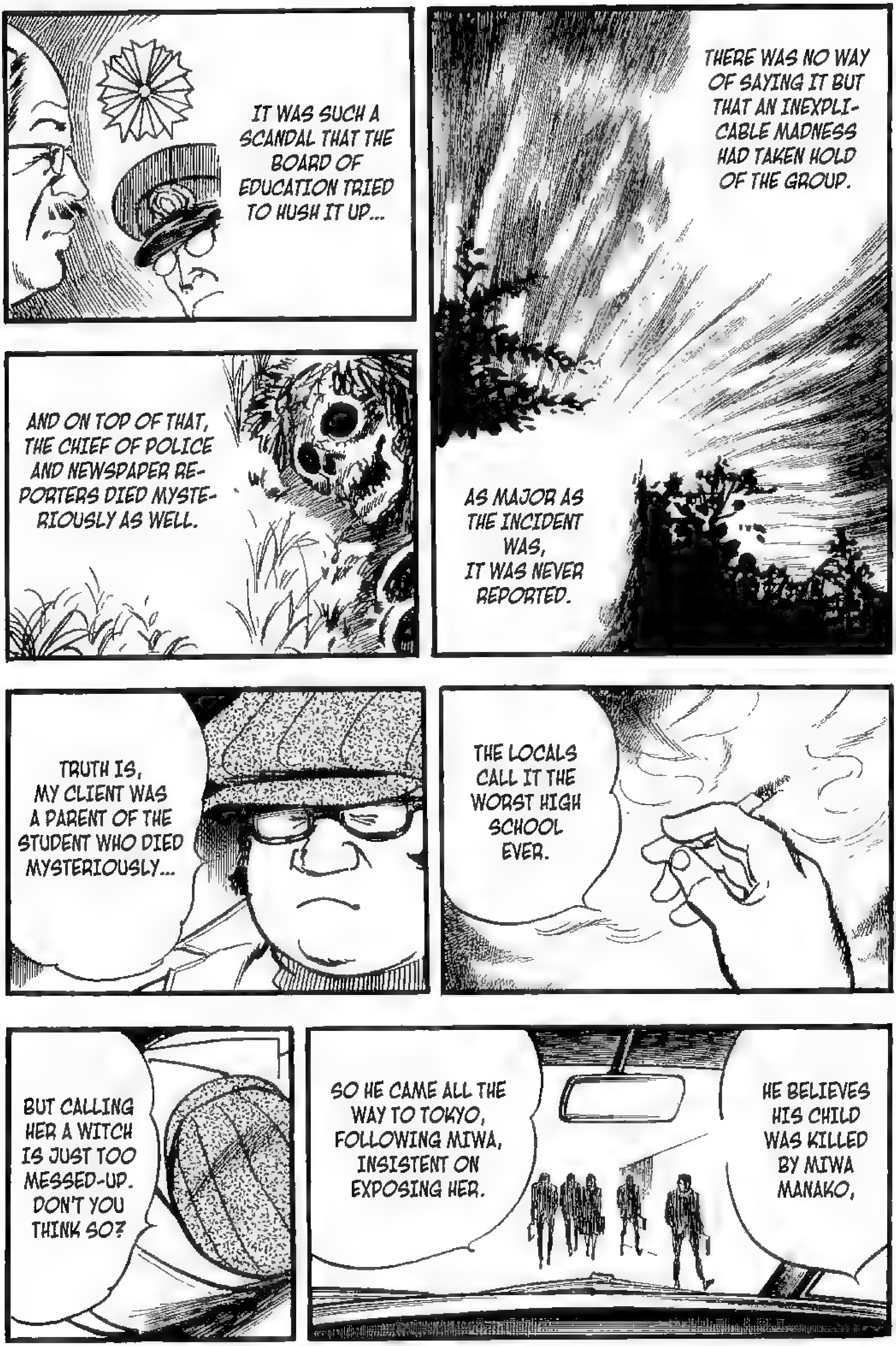

THIS WAS HOW PRIVATE EYE AKAHARA'S STORY WENT.
BEFORE MIWA MANAKO MOVED TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL, SHE WAS A TEACHER AT T HIGH IN WAKAYAMA PREFECTURE. AND WHILE SHE WAS EMPLOYED AT THAT HIGH SCHOOL, STRANGE THINGS HAPPENED.

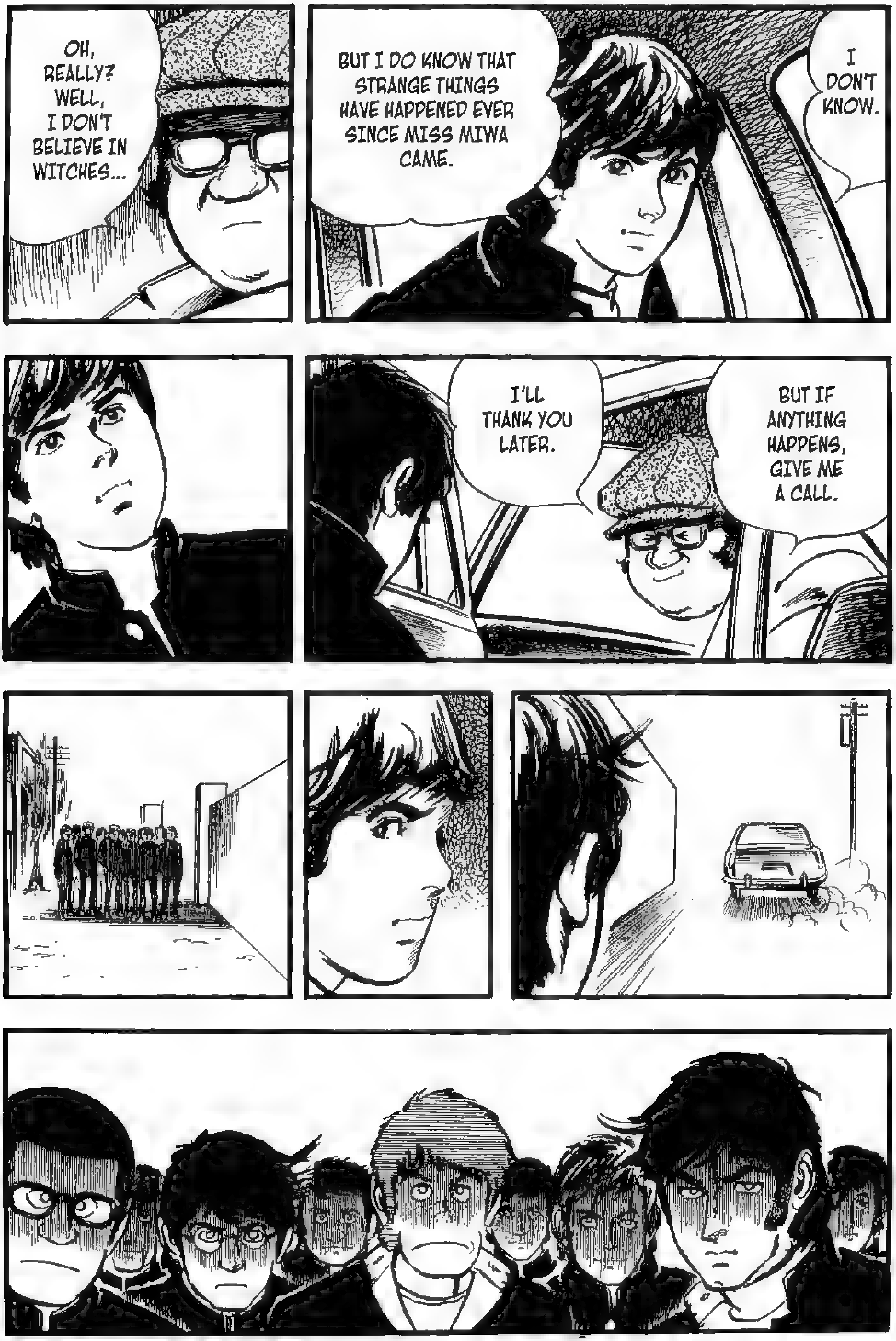

DOZENS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS WENT MAD OR HAD UNNATURAL DEATHS, AND IN THE END, IT WAS LIKE THE WHOLE SCHOOL WAS MAD.

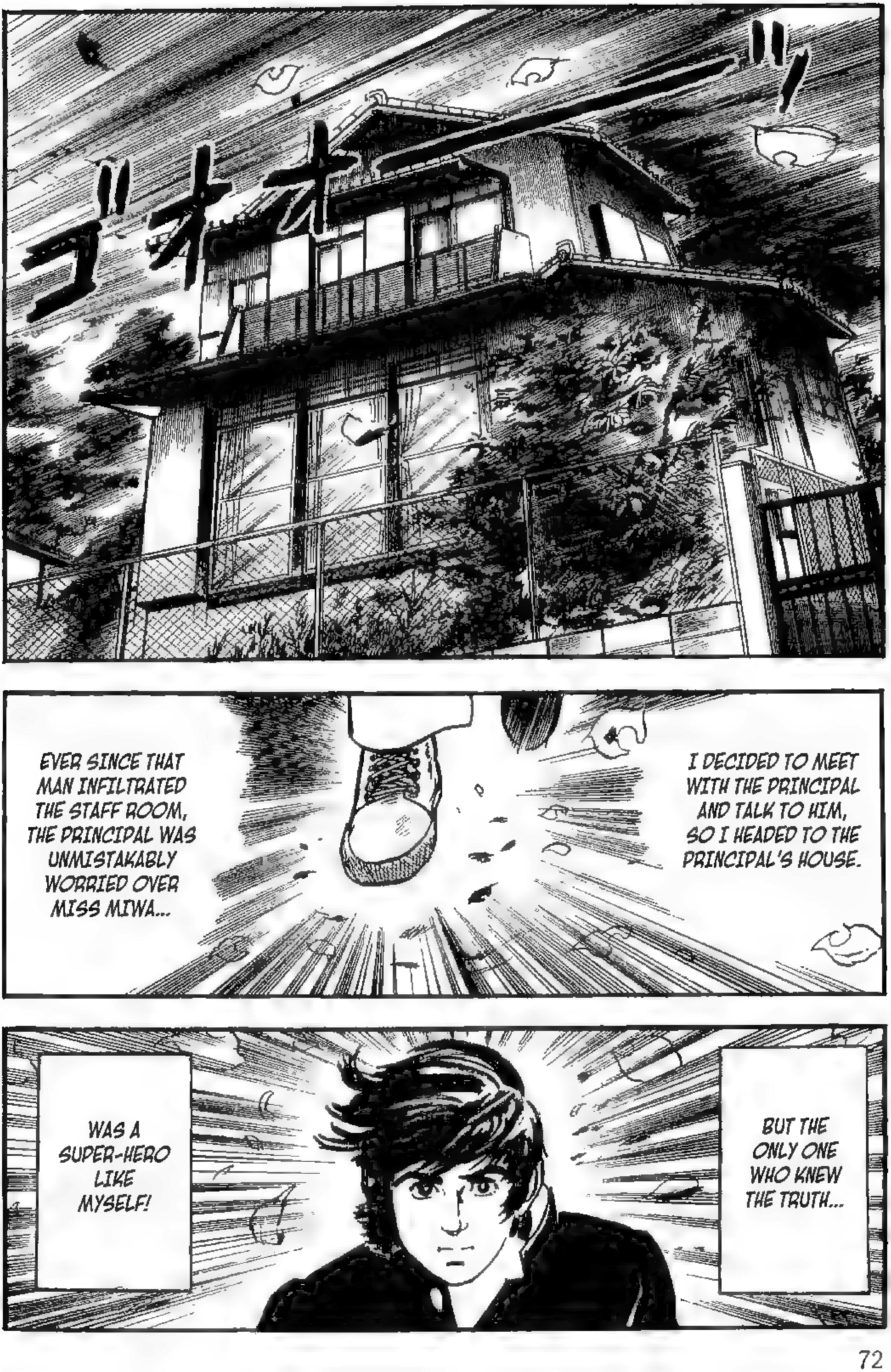

THE MALE TEACHERS ASSAULTED THE FEMALE STUDENTS ...

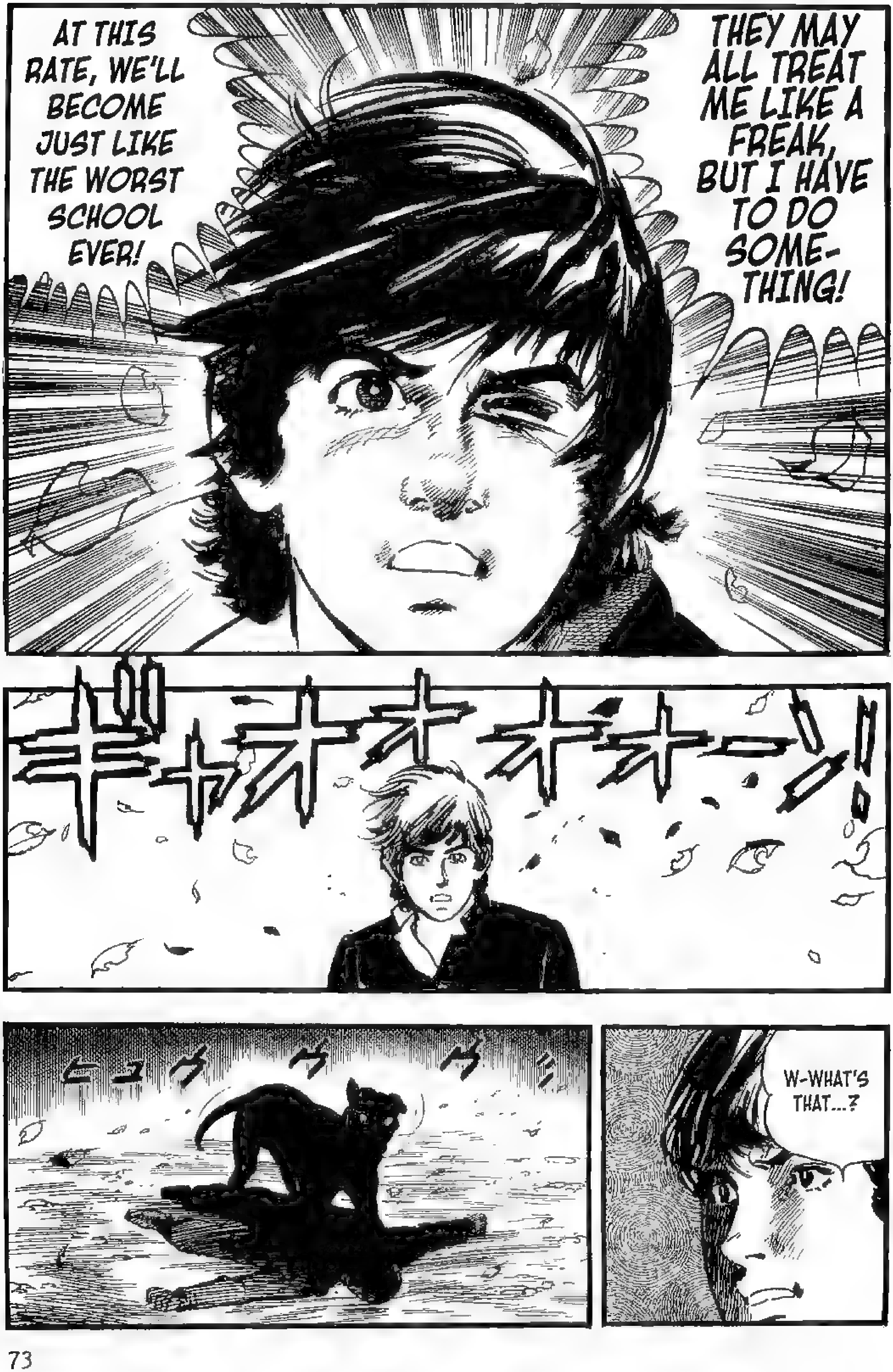

AND THE MALE STUDENTS ASSAULTED THE FEMALE TEACHERS ...


THE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS WERE DIVIDED ...
THEY WOULD BRANDISH WEAPONS LIKE KNIVES OR STEEL CLUBS, AND FIGHTS BROKE OUT. THEY SAID THERE WERE EVEN CASUALTIES.

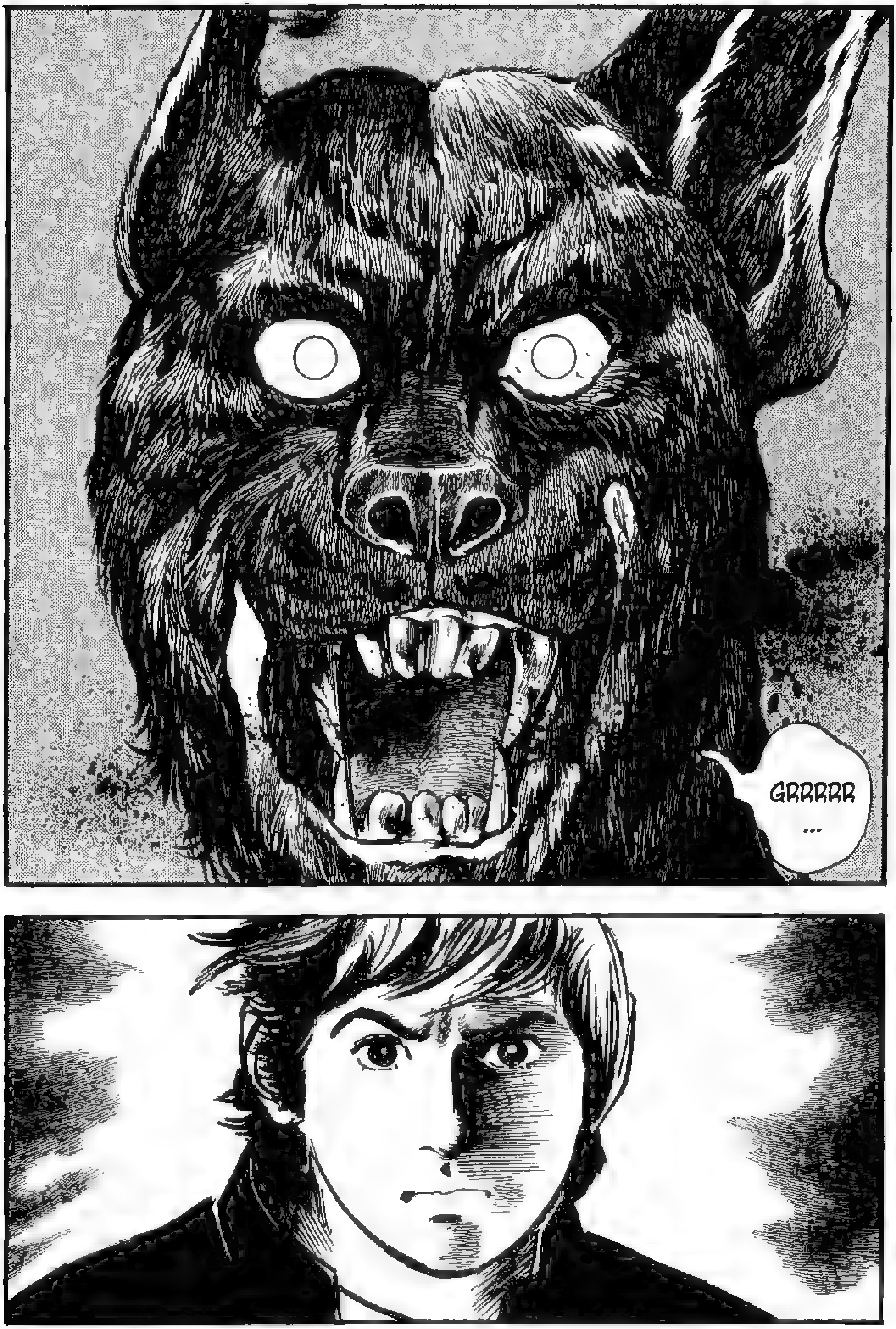

THERE WAS NO WAY OF SAYING IT BUT THAT AN INEXPLICABLE MADNESS HAD TAKEN HOLD OF THE GROUP.
AS MAJOR AS THE INCIDENT WAS, IT WAS NEVER REPORTED.
IT WAS SUCH A SCANDAL THAT THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TRIED TO HUSH IT UP...
AND ON TOP OF THAT, THE CHIEF OF POLICE AND NEWSPAPER REPORTERS DIED MYSTERIOUSLY AS WELL.
THE LOCALS CALL IT THE WORST HIGH SCHOOL EVER.
TRUTH IS, MY CLIENT WAS A PARENT OF THE STUDENT WHO DIED MYSTERIOUSLY...
HE BELIEVES HIS CHILD WAS KILLED BY MIWA MANAKO,
SO HE CAME ALL THE WAY TO TOKYO, FOLLOWING MIWA, INSISTENT ON EXPOSING HER.
BUT CALLING HER A WITCH IS JUST TOO MESSED-UP. DON'T YOU THINK SO?

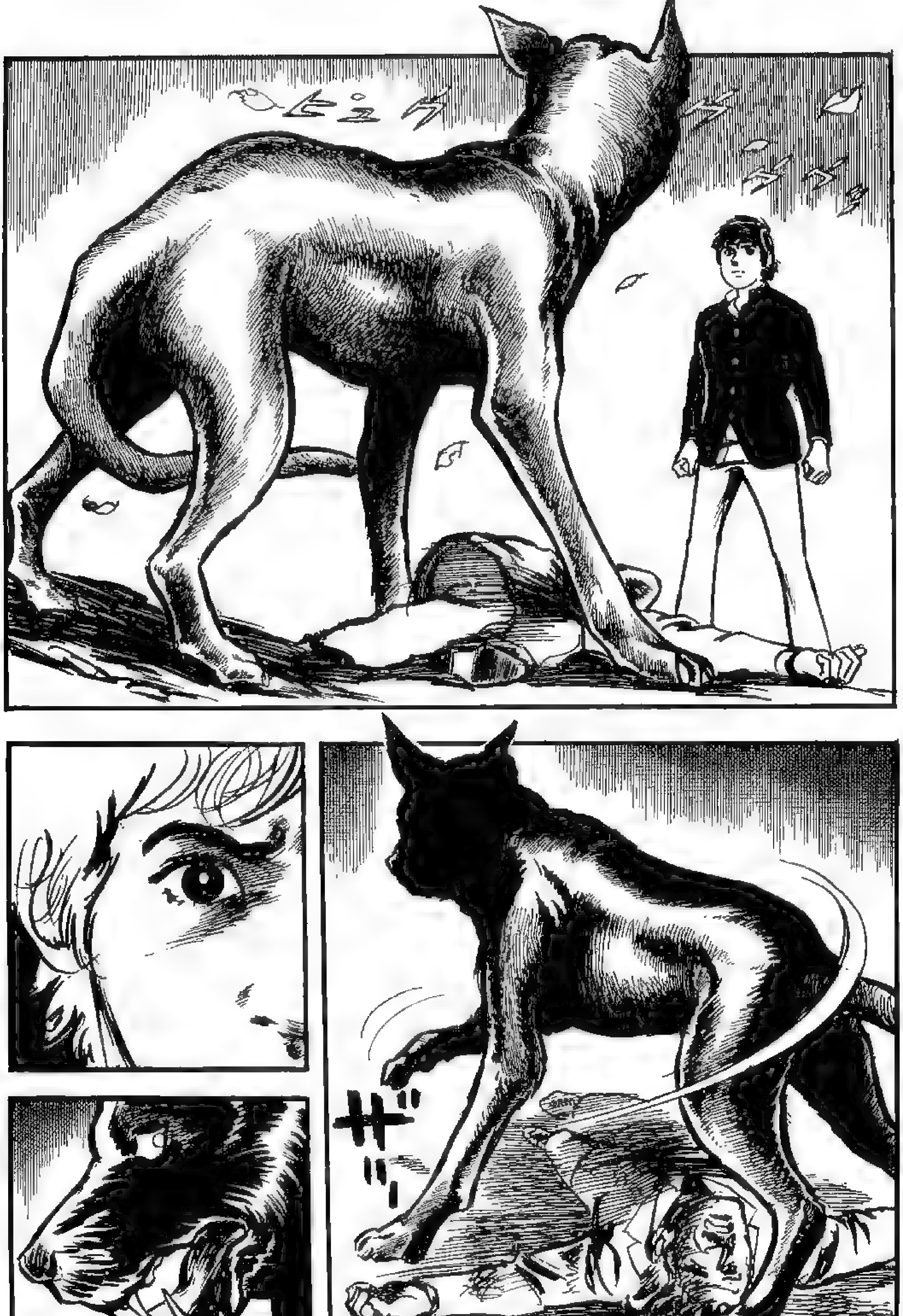

I DON'T KNOW.
BUT I DO KNOW THAT STRANGE THINGS HAVE HAPPENED EVER SINCE MISS MIWA CAME.
OH, REALLY? WELL, I DON'T BELIEVE IN WITCHES...
BUT IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, GIVE ME A CALL.
I'LL THANK YOU LATER.

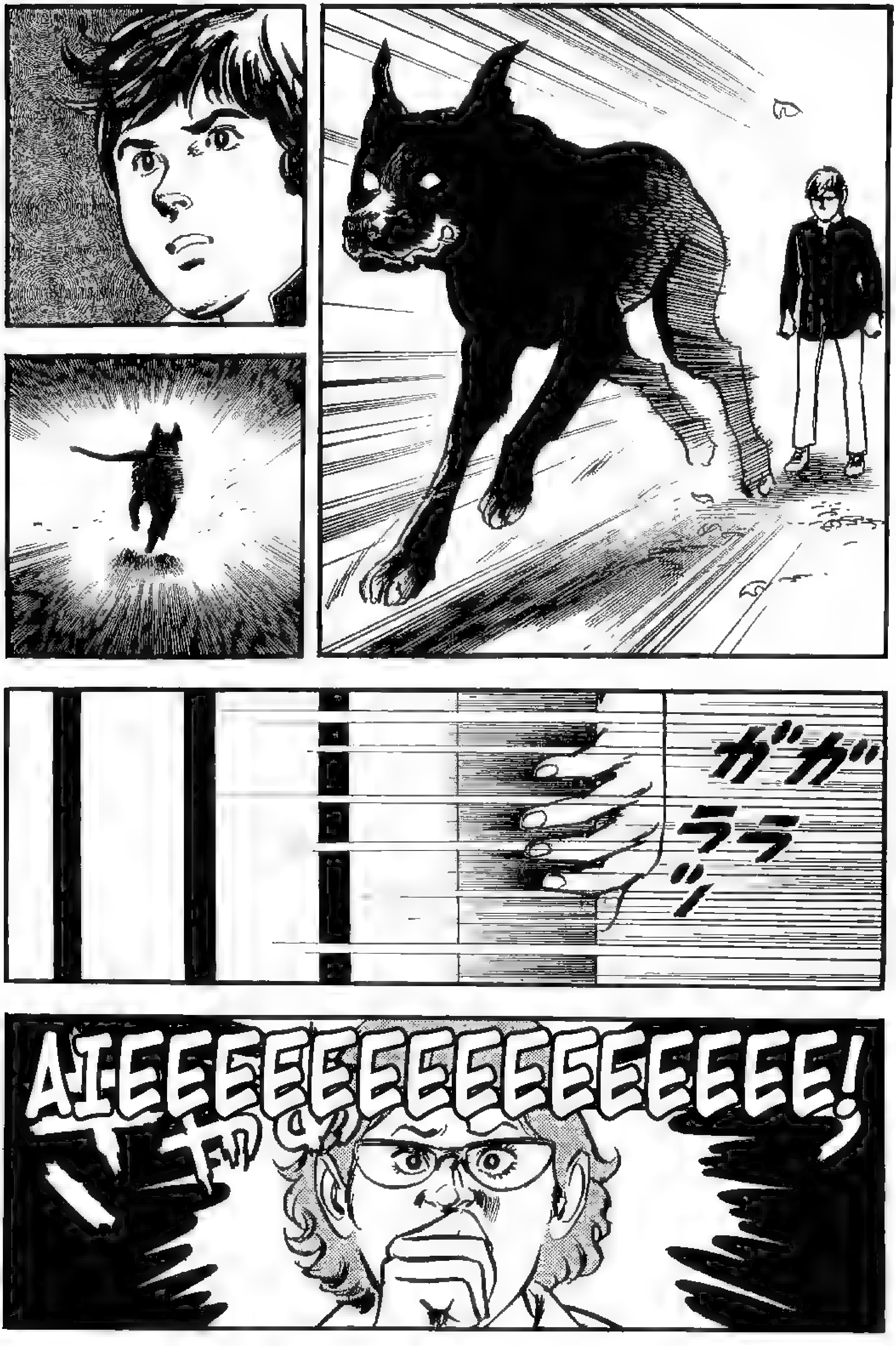

ゴオオ―ッ!
I DECIDED TO MEET WITH THE PRINCIPAL AND TALK TO HIM, SO I HEADED TO THE PRINCIPAL'S HOUSE.
EVER SINCE THAT MAN INFILTRATED THE STAFF ROOM, THE PRINCIPAL WAS UNMISTAKABLY WORRIED OVER MISS MIWA...
BUT THE ONLY ONE WHO KNEW THE TRUTH...
WAS A SUPER-HERO LIKE MYSELF!

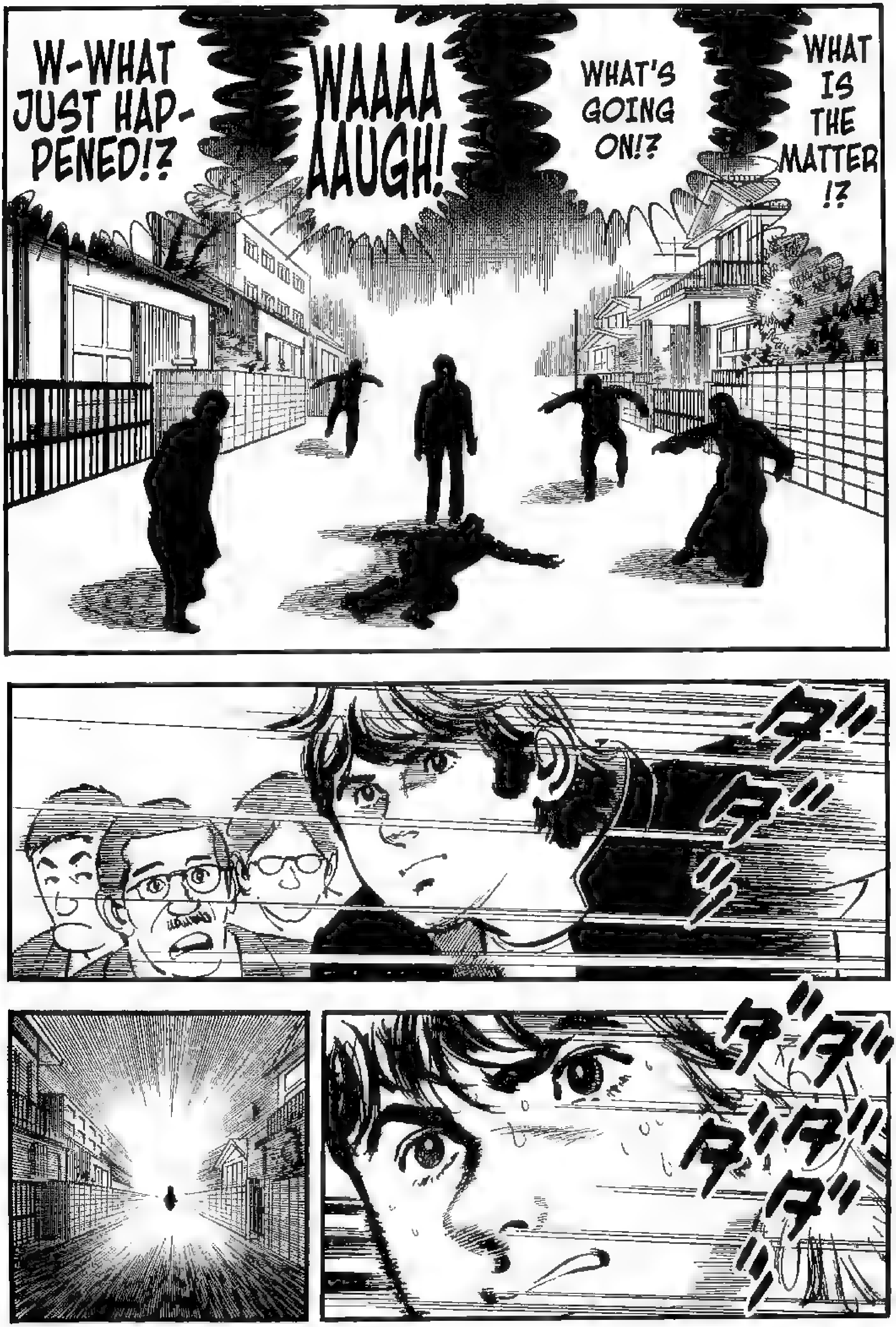

THEY MAY ALL TREAT ME LIKE A FREAK, BUT I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING!
AT THIS RATE, WE'LL BECOME JUST LIKE THE WORST SCHOOL EVER!
ギャオオオオオーン!!
W-WHAT'S THAT...?
ヒュウウウ

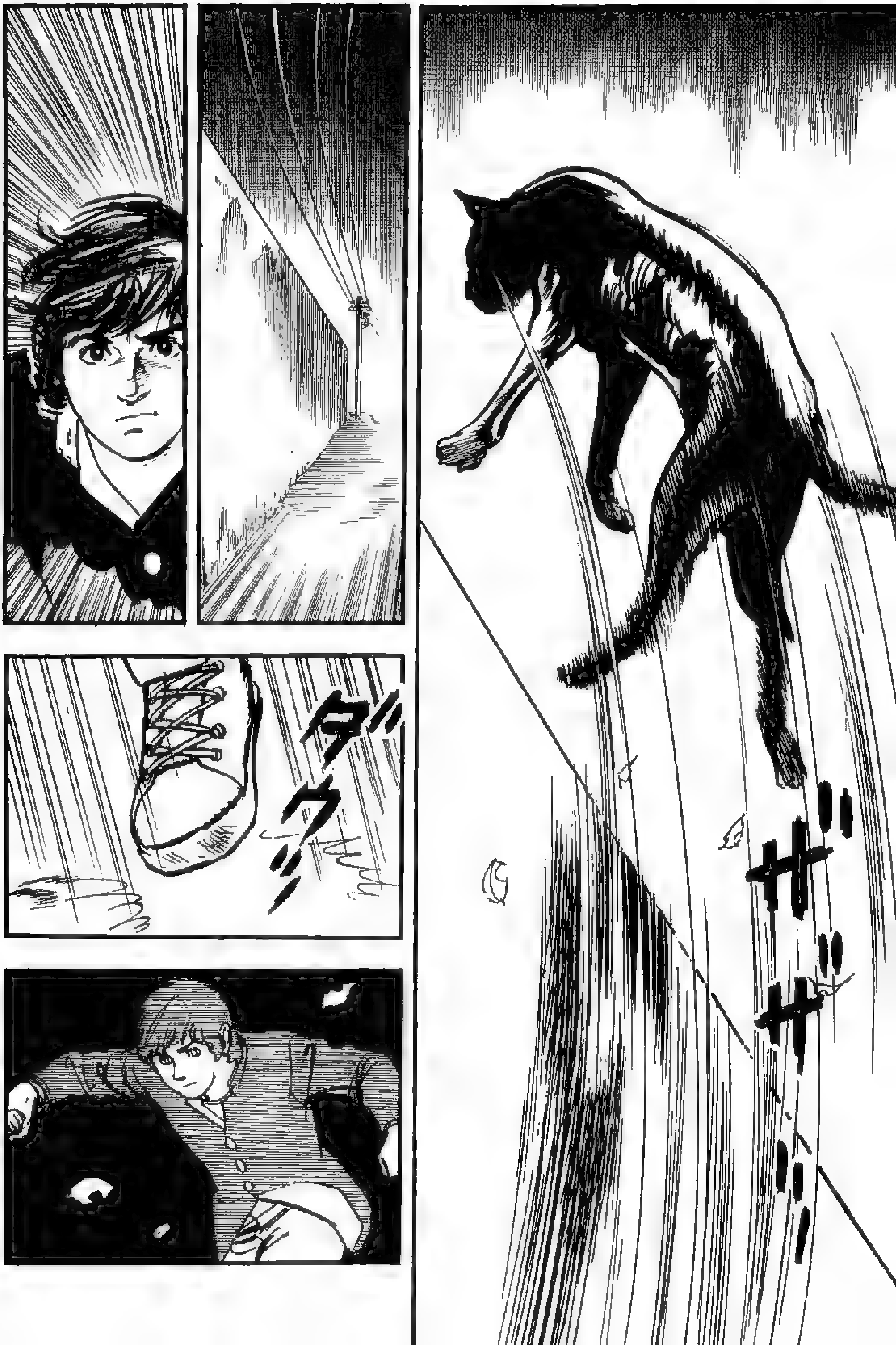
PRINCIPAL!!


GRRRRR ...


ザザザッ
ヒュウ
ザッ


ガガララッ
AIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!
キャーッ


WHAT IS THE MATTER!?
WHAT'S GOING ON!?
WAAAA AAUGH!
W-WHAT JUST HAPPENED!?
ダッ ダッ ダッ
ダッ ダッ ダッ ダッ ダッ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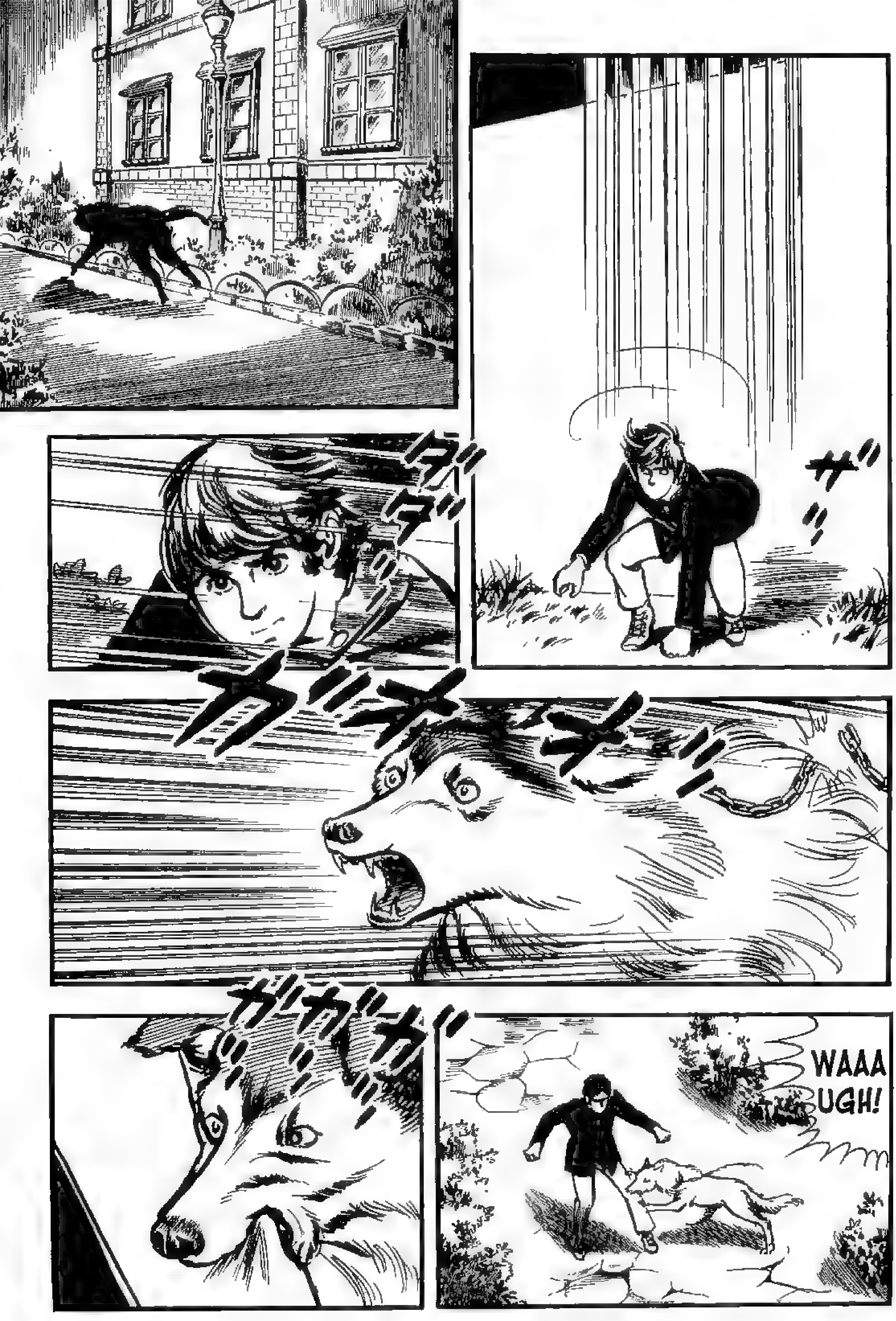
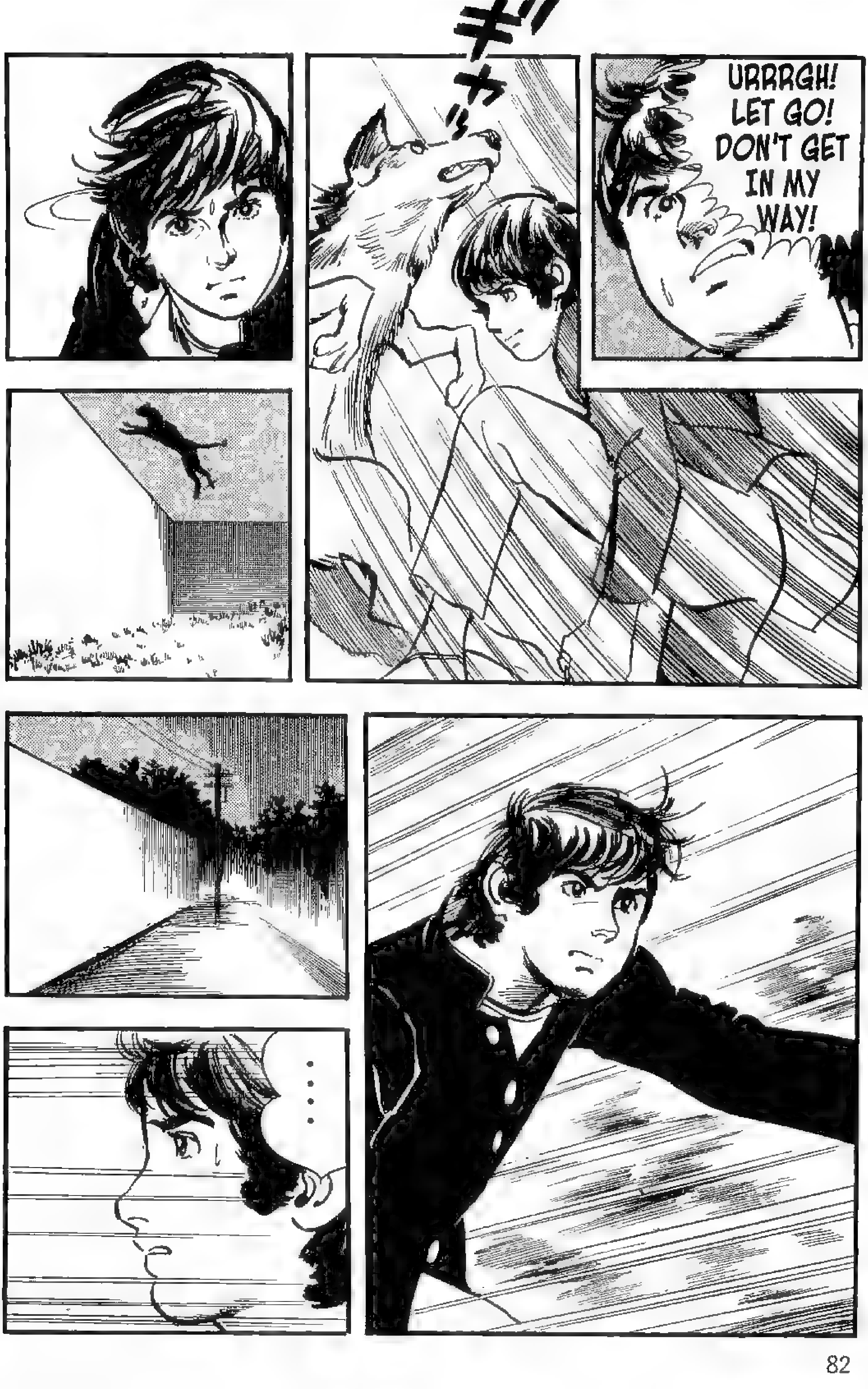
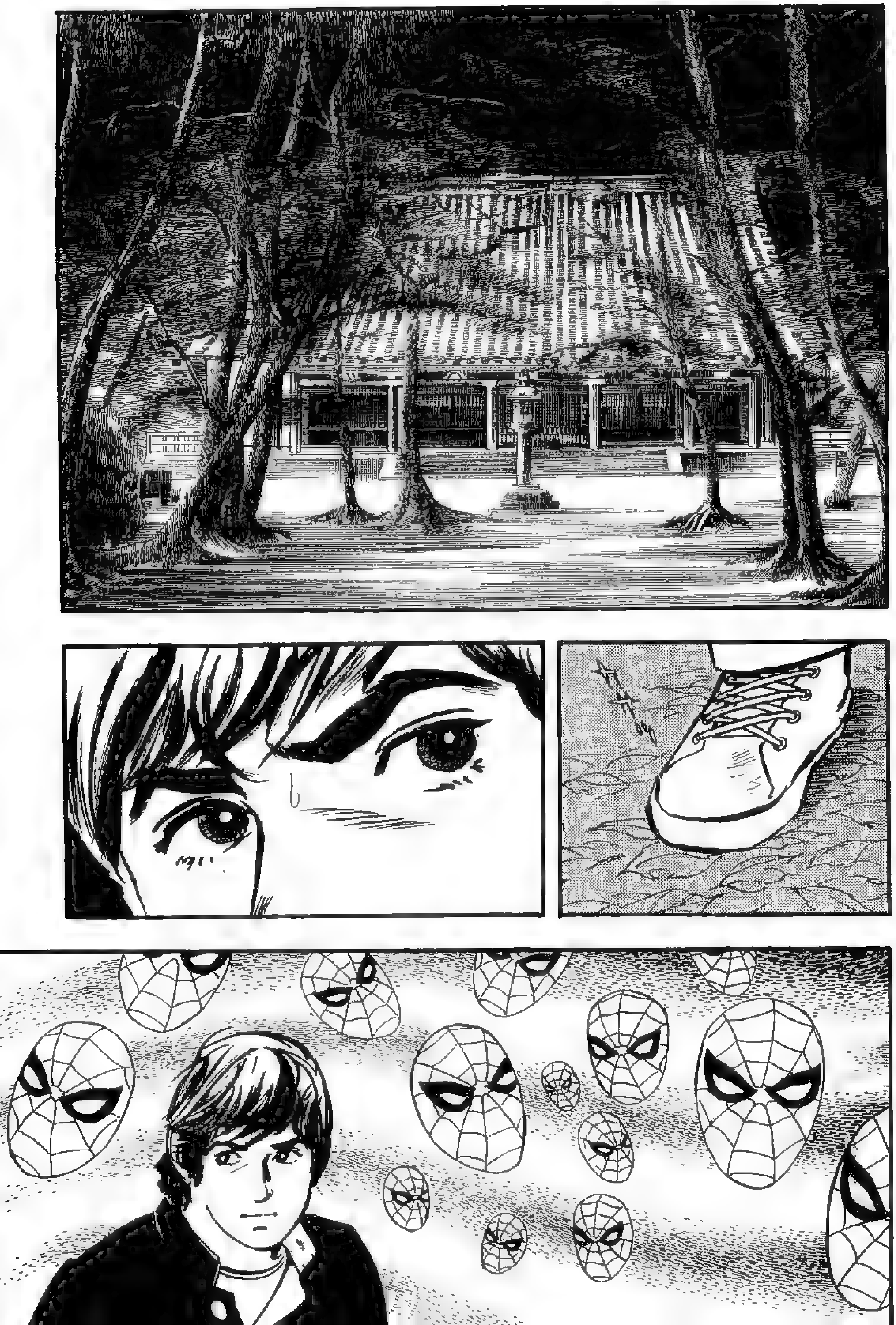
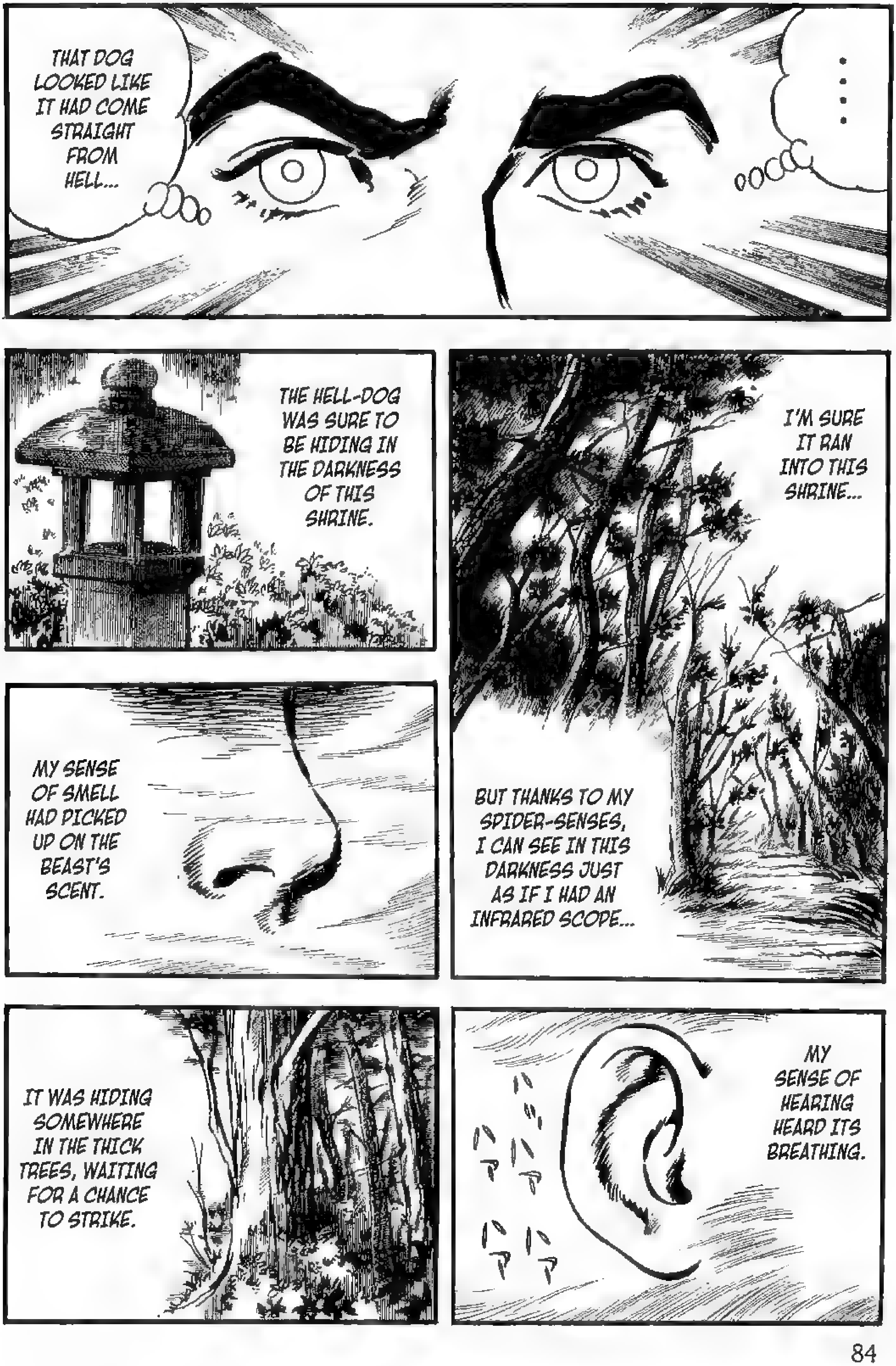
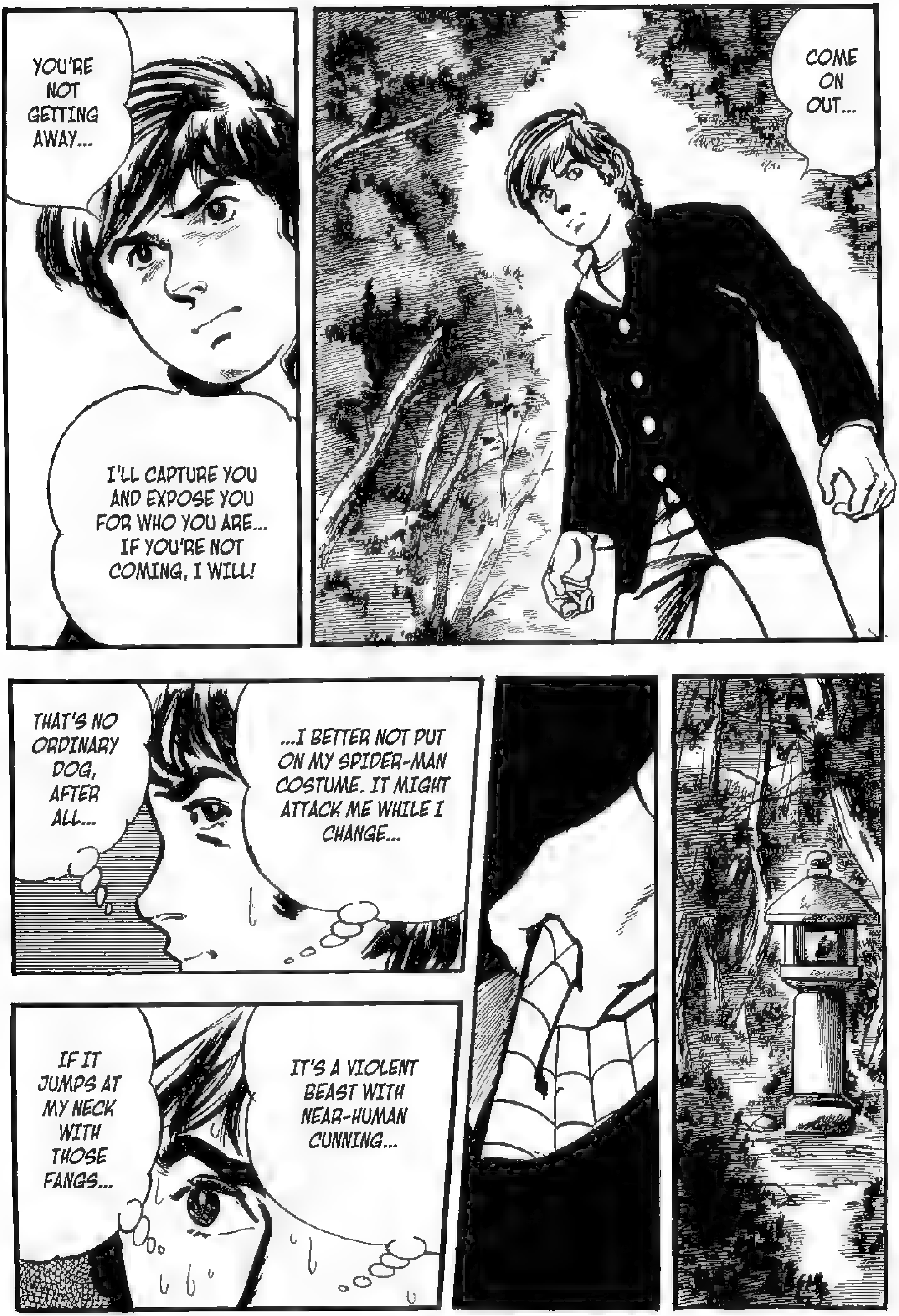
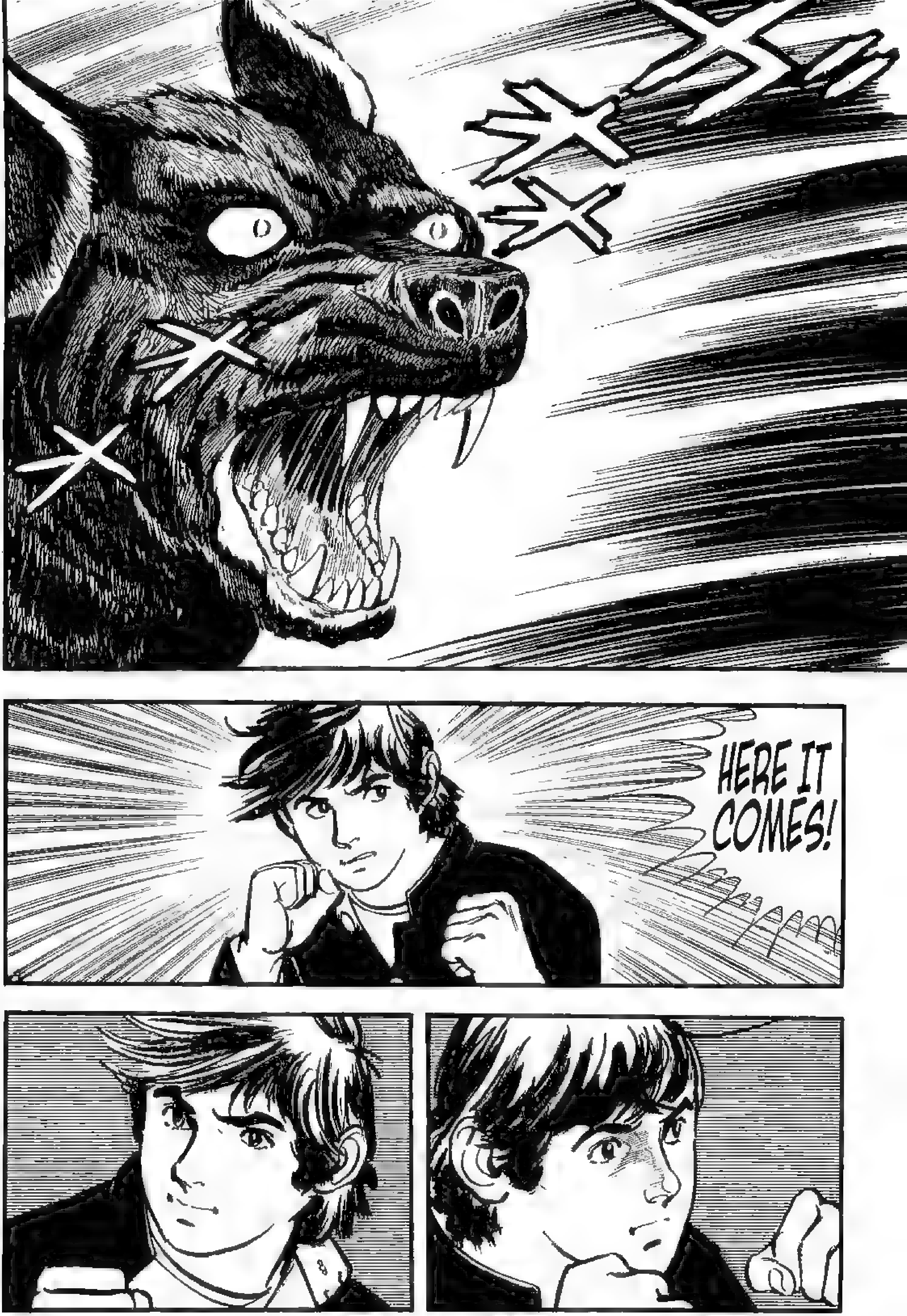

ザッ
ダダッ
ガオオー
WAAA UGH!
ガガガ

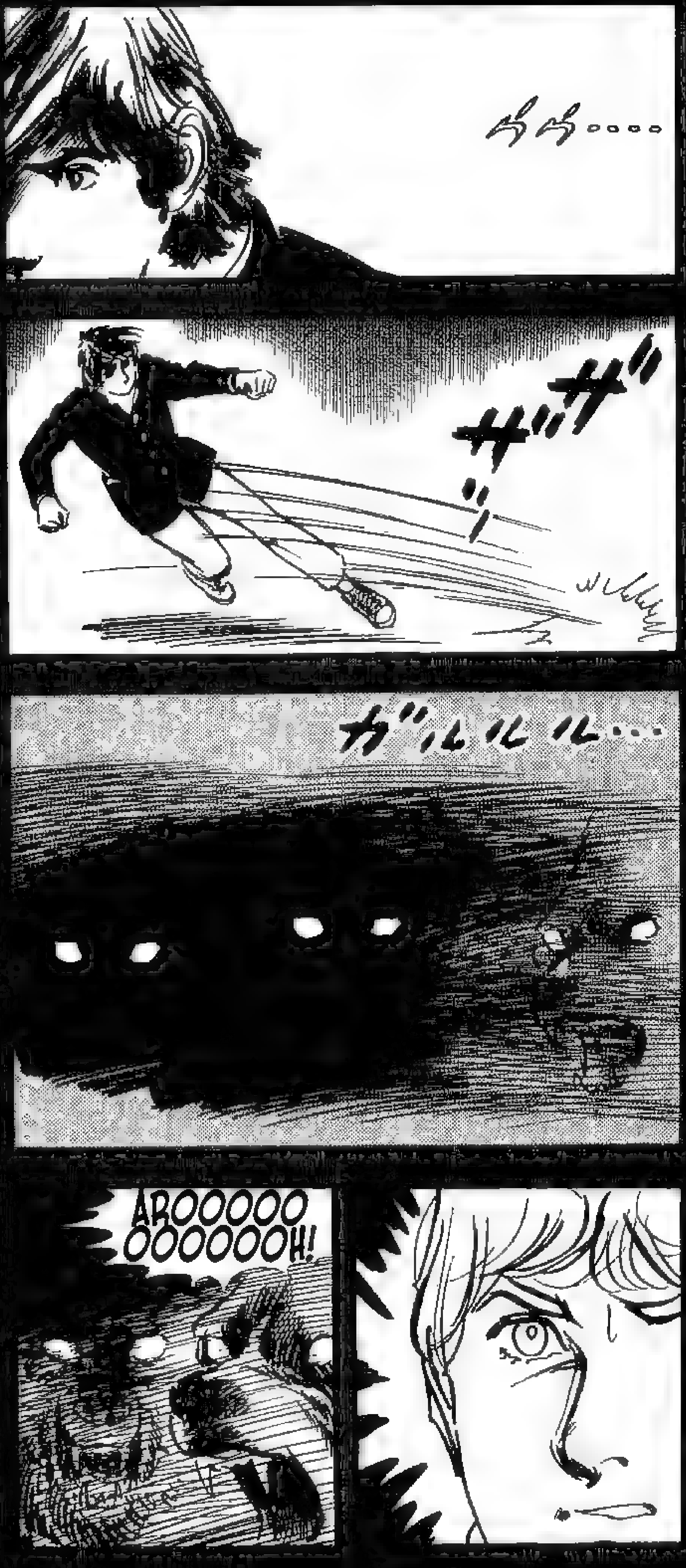

ギャン
URRRGH! LET GO! DON'T GET IN MY WAY!
....



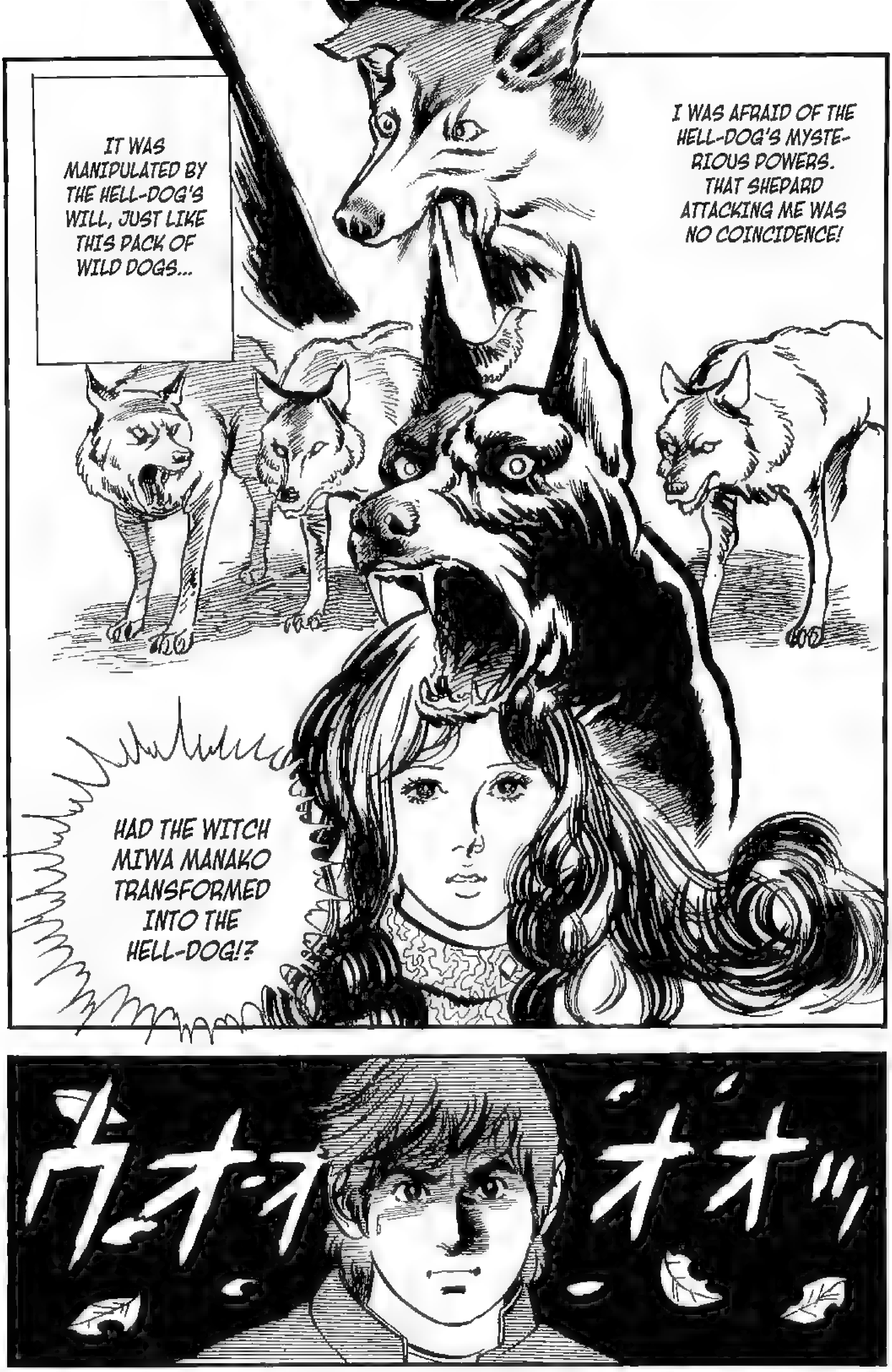

THAT DOG LOOKED LIKE IT HAD COME STRAIGHT FROM HELL...
....
THE HELL-DOG WAS SURE TO BE HIDING IN THE DARKNESS OF THIS SHRINE.
I'M SURE IT RAN INTO THIS SHRINE...
MY SENSE OF SMELL HAD PICKED UP ON THE BEAST'S SCENT.
BUT THANKS TO MY SPIDER-SENSES, I CAN SEE IN THIS DARKNESS JUST AS IF I HAD AN INFRARED SCOPE...
IT WAS HIDING SOMEWHERE IN THE THICK TREES, WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO STRIKE.
MY SENSE OF HEARING HEARD ITS BREATHING.

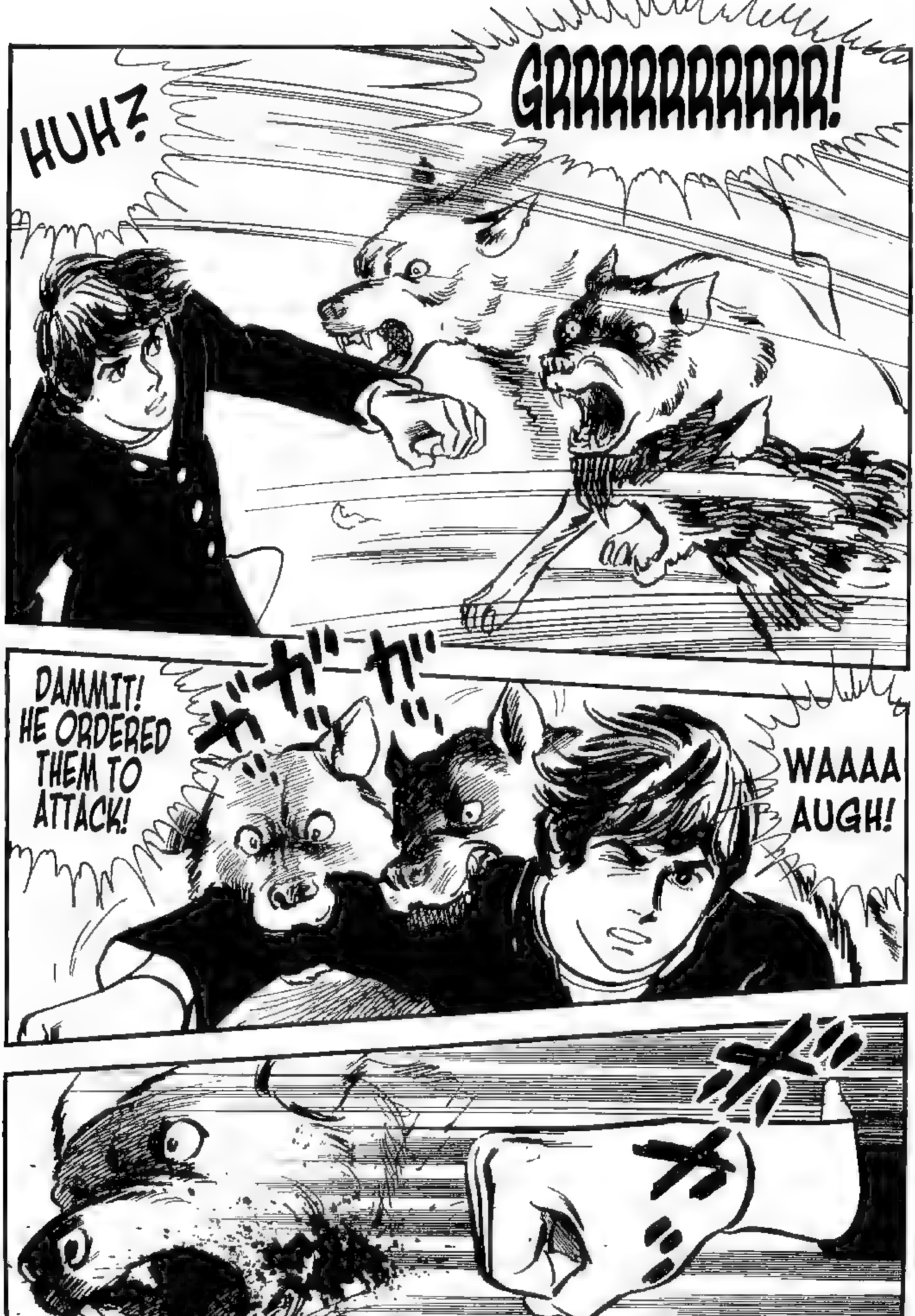

COME ON OUT...
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY...
I'LL CAPTURE YOU AND EXPOSE YOU FOR WHO YOU ARE... IF YOU'RE NOT COMING, I WILL!
...I BETTER NOT PUT ON MY SPIDER-MAN COSTUME. IT MIGHT ATTACK ME WHILE I CHANGE...
THAT'S NO ORDINARY DOG, AFTER ALL...
IT'S A VIOLENT BEAST WITH NEAR-HUMAN CUNNING...
IF IT JUMPS AT MY NECK WITH THOSE FANGS...

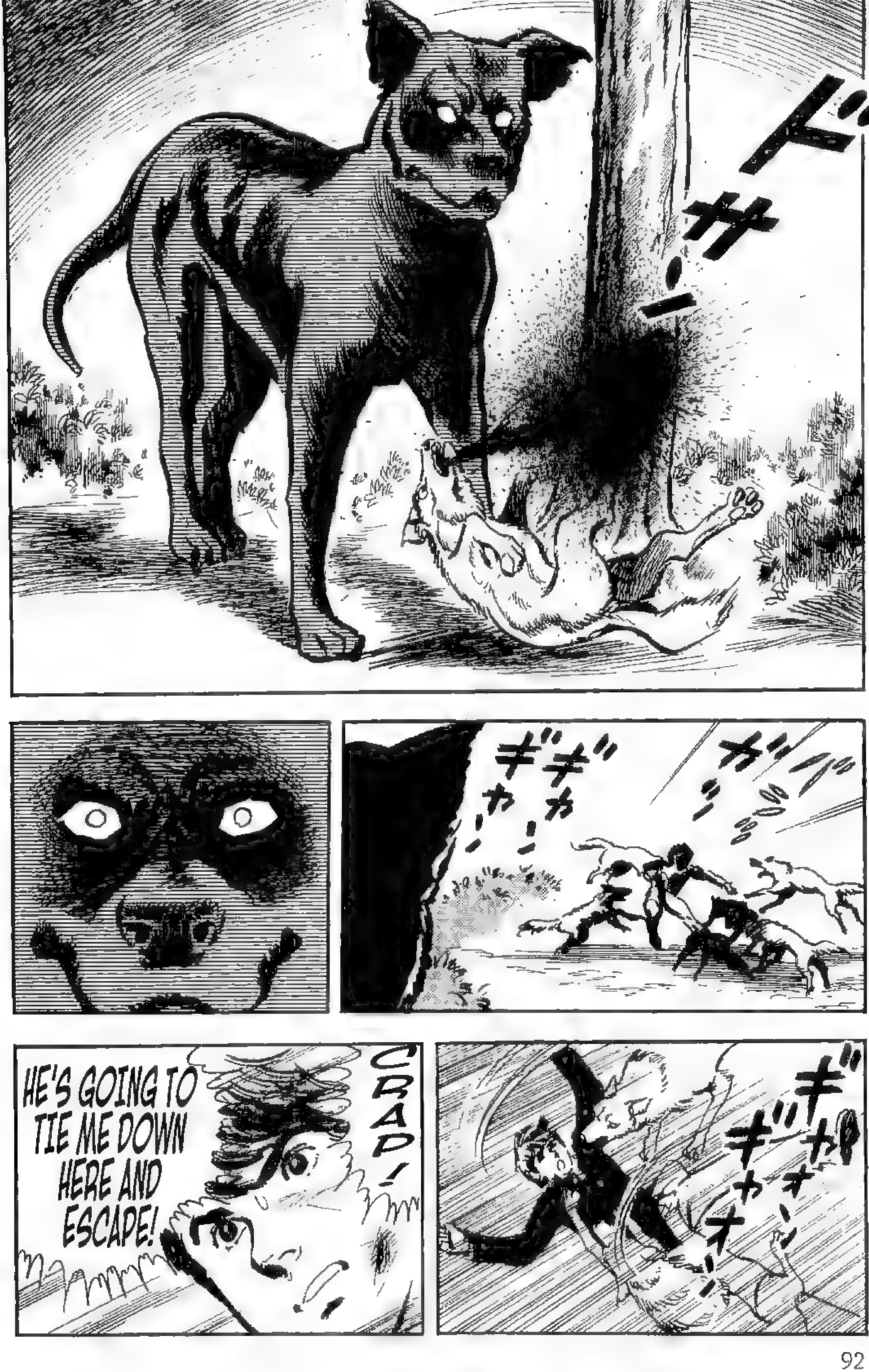

HERE IT COMES!

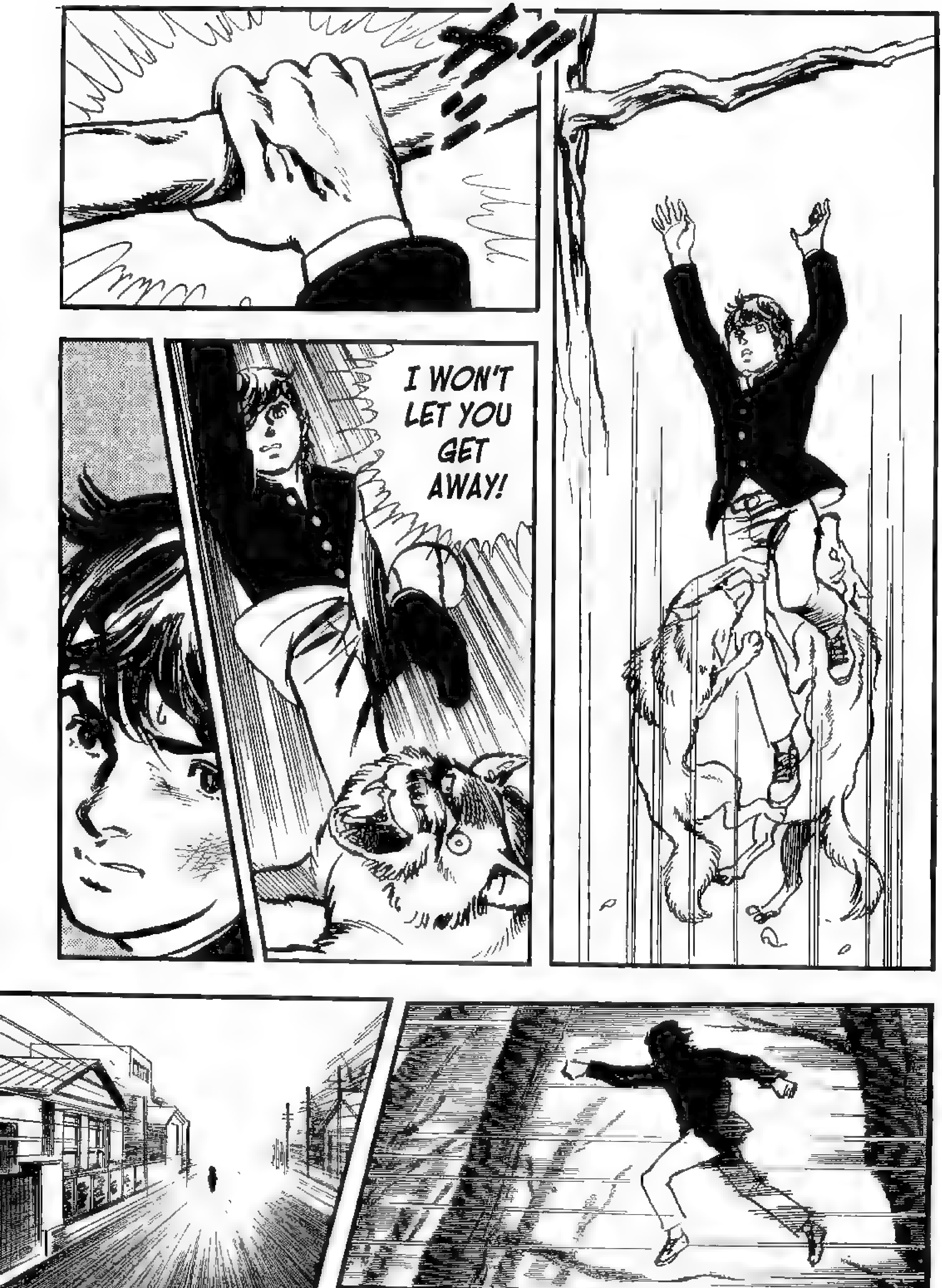

らら····
ザザーッ
ガルルル…
AROOOOOO
OOOOOOOH!

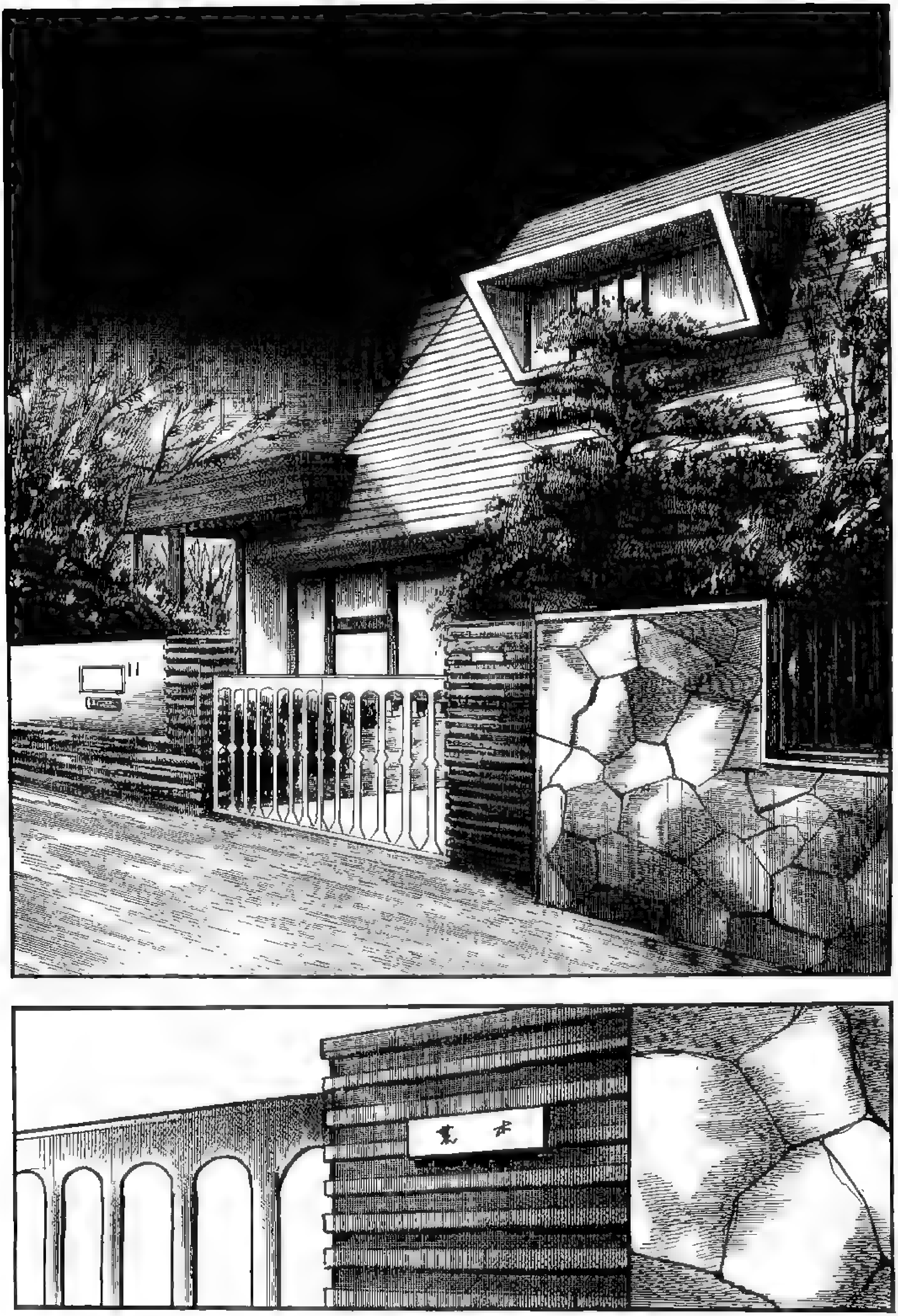
GRRRRRRRRRRRR...
GRRRRR
RRRR...
RAWR-
RRRRRRRRR...
GRRRRRRRRR...
W-WHEN DID THESE WILD DOGS GET HERE...!?
DID THAT HELL-DOG CALL REINFORCEMENTS WITH THAT HOWL ...!?
GR-RRRRRRRRRRRRR ...
RAWR-RRRRRRRR...
I WAS ASSAULTED BY AN INEXPRESSIBLE TERROR!
BUT IT WAS NOT FEAR OF THE PACK OF WILD DOGS, BUT OF THE HELL-DOG ...

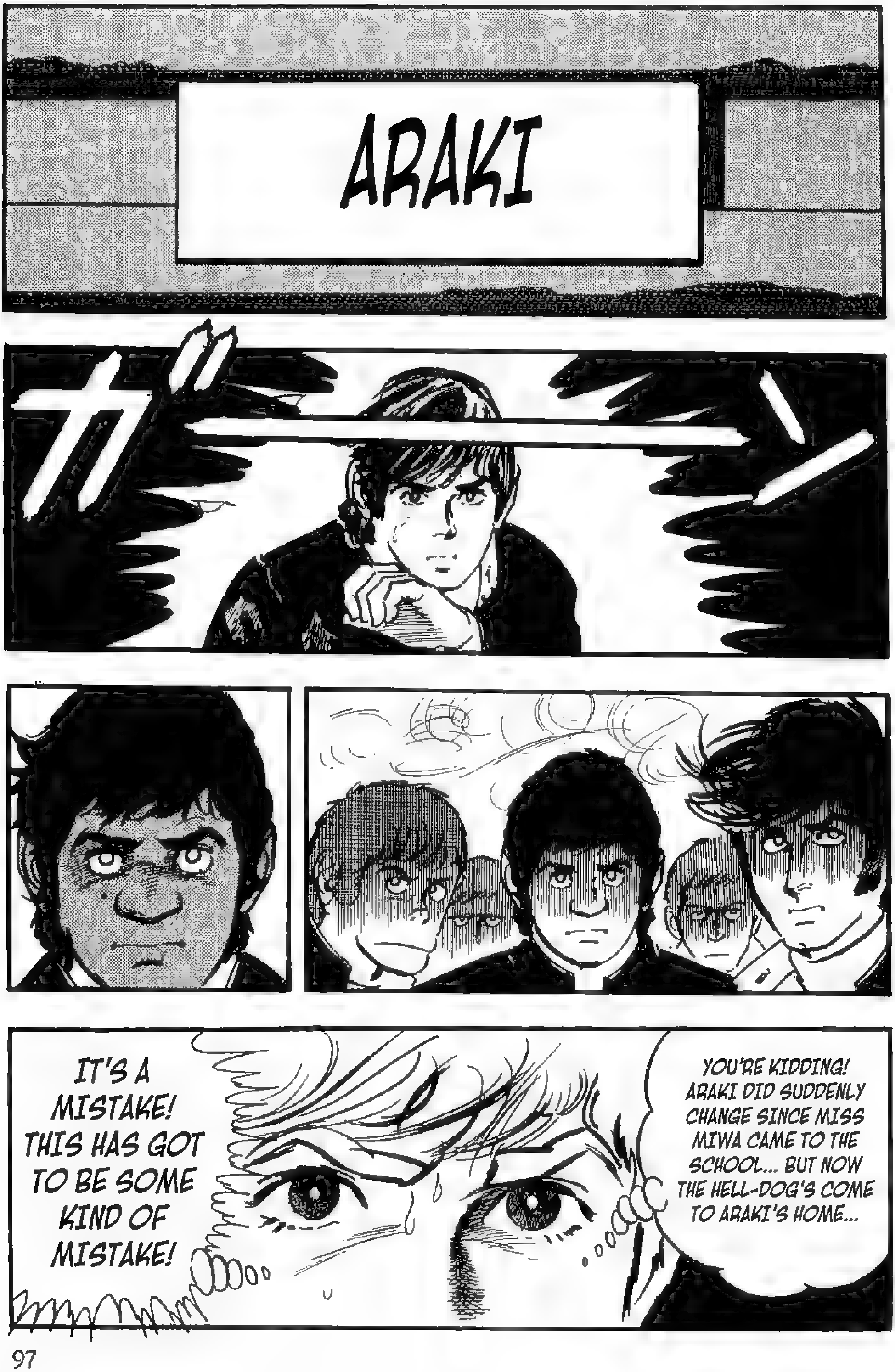

I WAS AFRAID OF THE HELL-DOG'S MYSTERIOUS POWERS. THAT SHEPARD ATTACKING ME WAS NO COINCIDENCE!
IT WAS MANIPULATED BY THE HELL-DOG'S WILL, JUST LIKE THIS PACK OF WILD DOGS...
HAD THE WITCH MIWA MANAKO TRANSFORMED INTO THE HELL-DOG!?
ウオオ オオッ

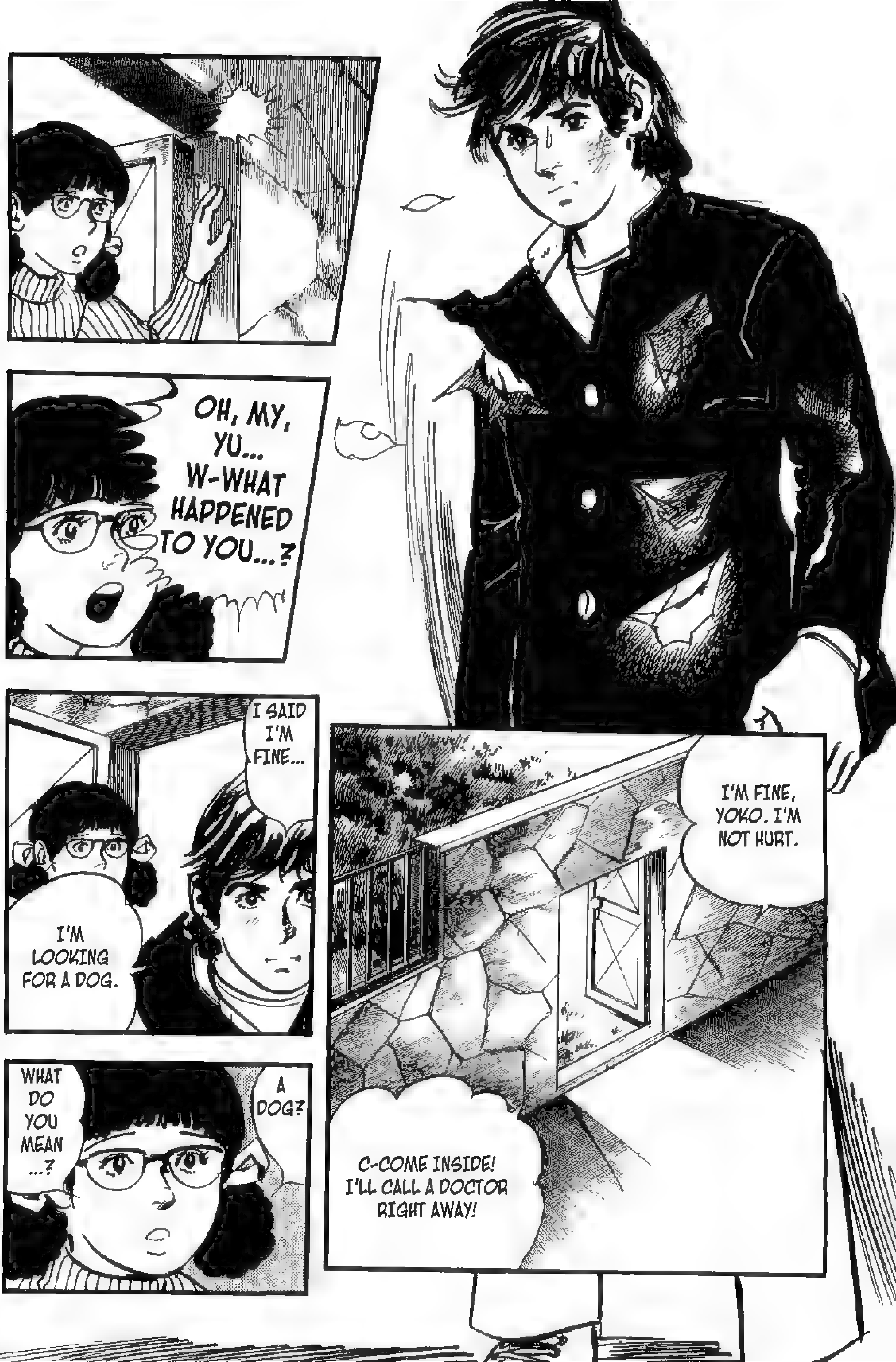

HUH?
GRRRRRRRRRRR!
DAMMIT! HE ORDERED THEM TO ATTACK!
ガガーガ!!
WAAAA AUGH!
ボ
ボ!!

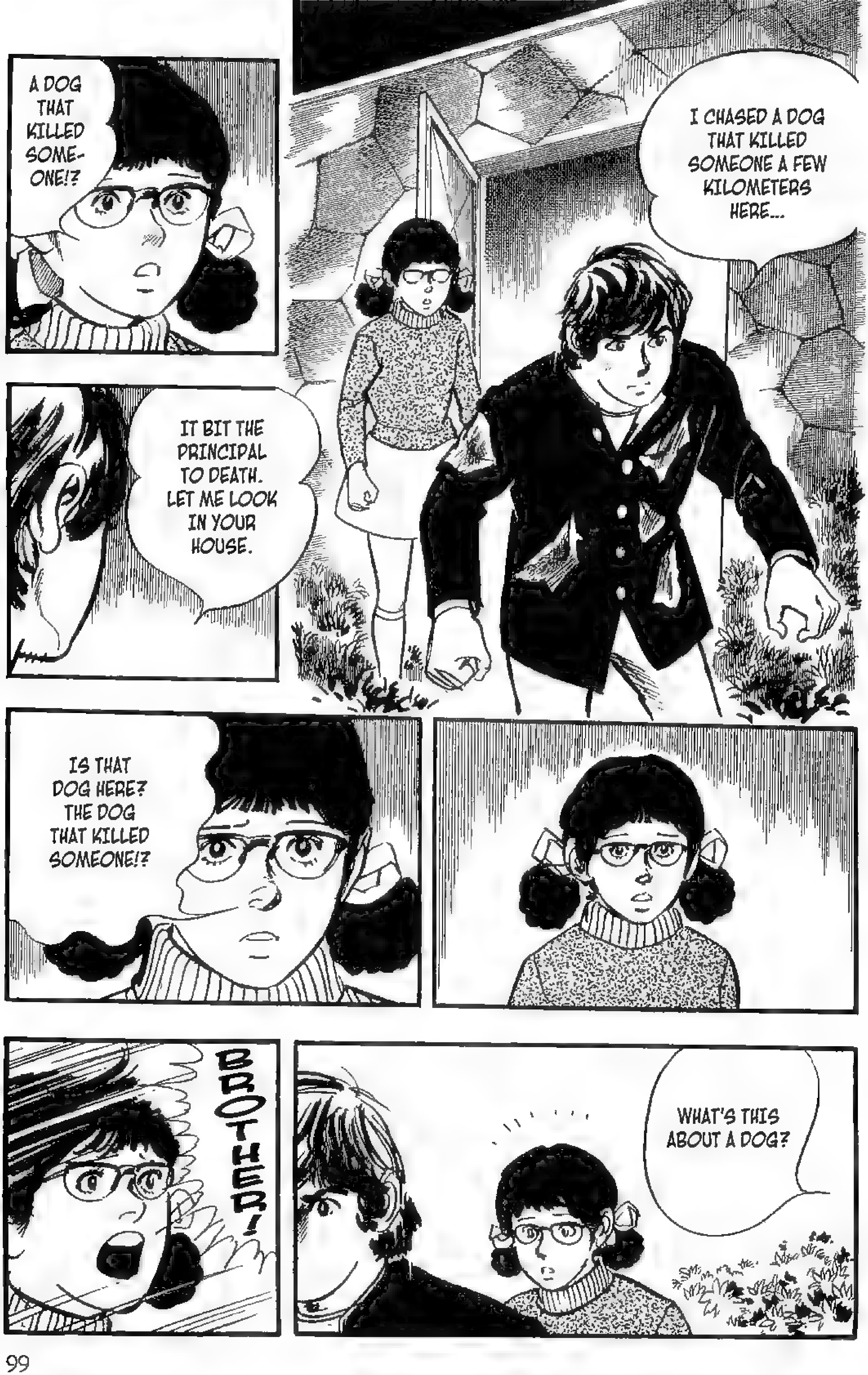

ドザッ
ガッ
ギャー!
ギャー!
ギャオーン
ギャオーン!
CRAP!
HE'S GOING TO TIE ME DOWN HERE AND ESCAPE!

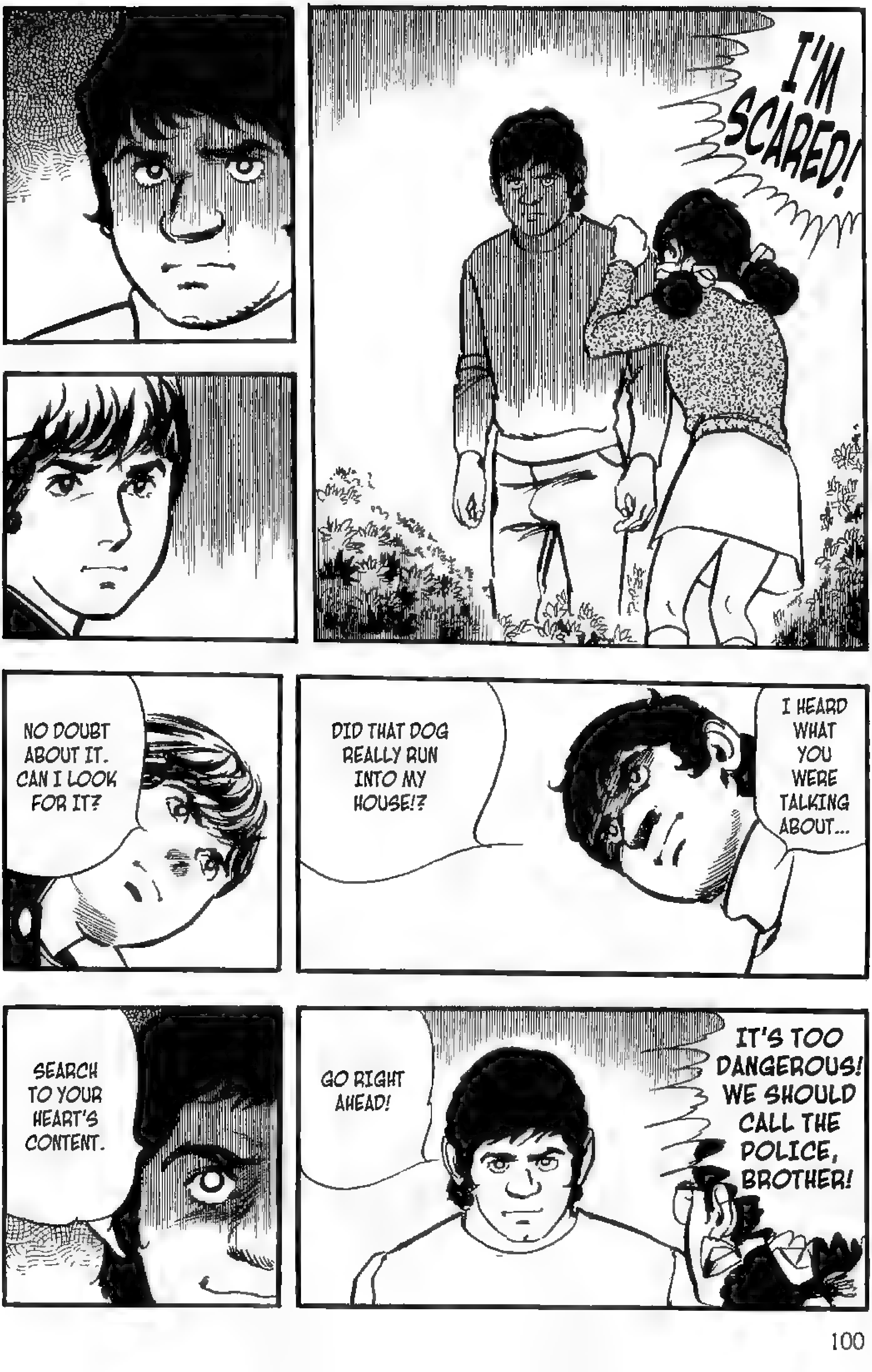

I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY!

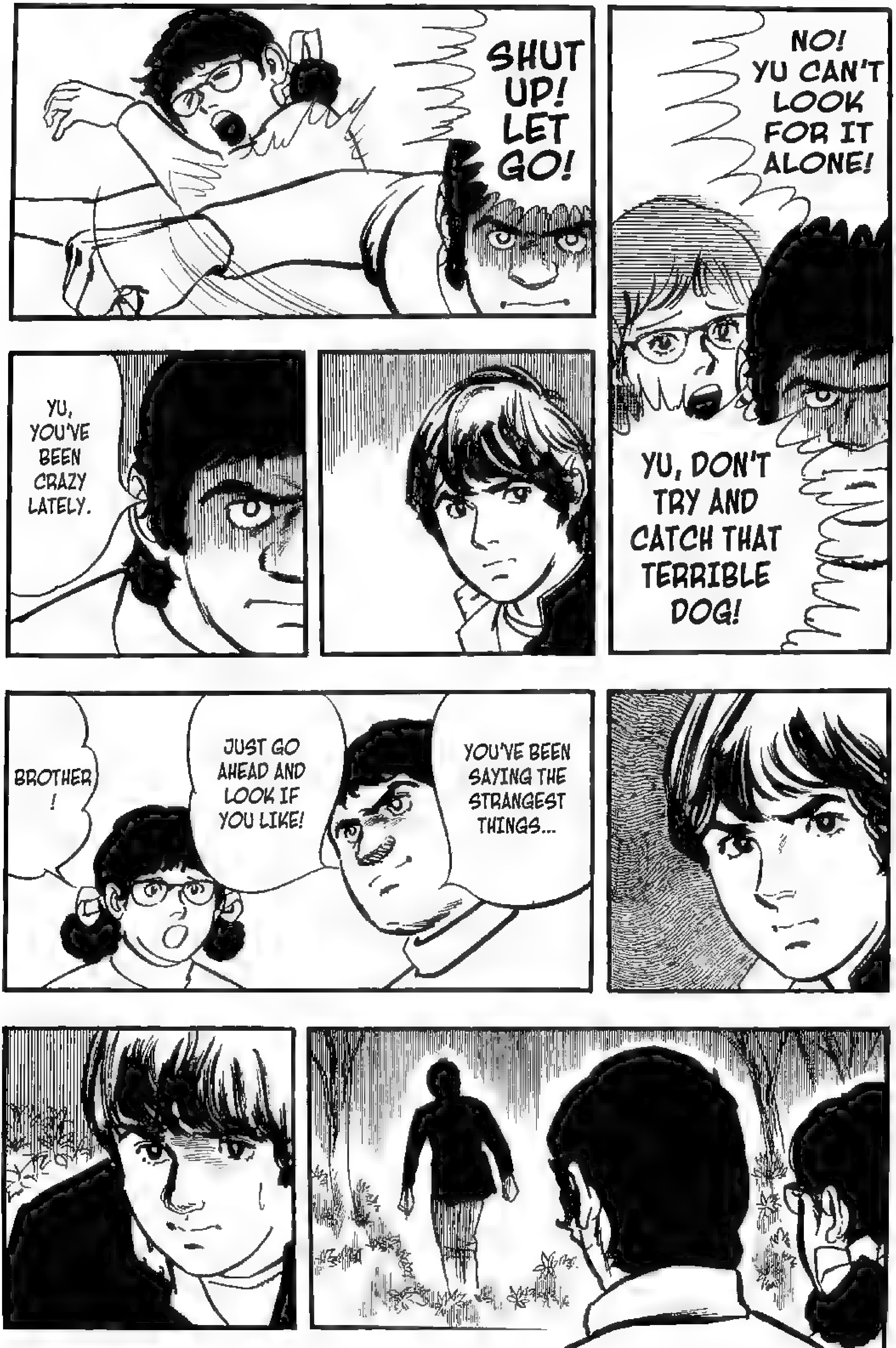


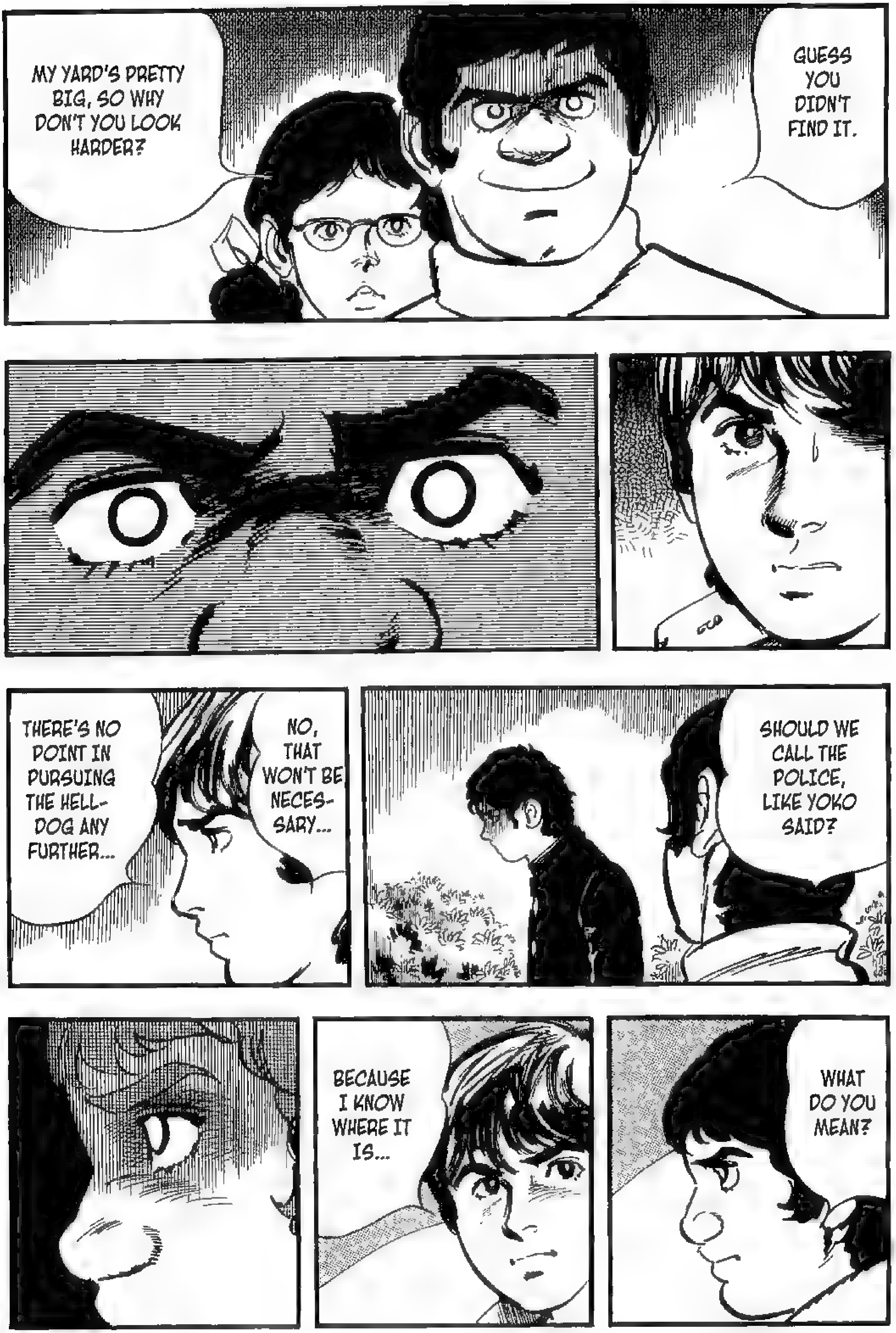

ARAKI
ガッ
IT'S A MISTAKE! THIS HAS GOT TO BE SOME KIND OF MISTAKE!
YOU'RE KIDDING! ARAKI DID SUDDENLY CHANGE SINCE MISS MIWA CAME TO THE SCHOOL... BUT NOW THE HELL-DOG'S COME TO ARAKI'S HOME...

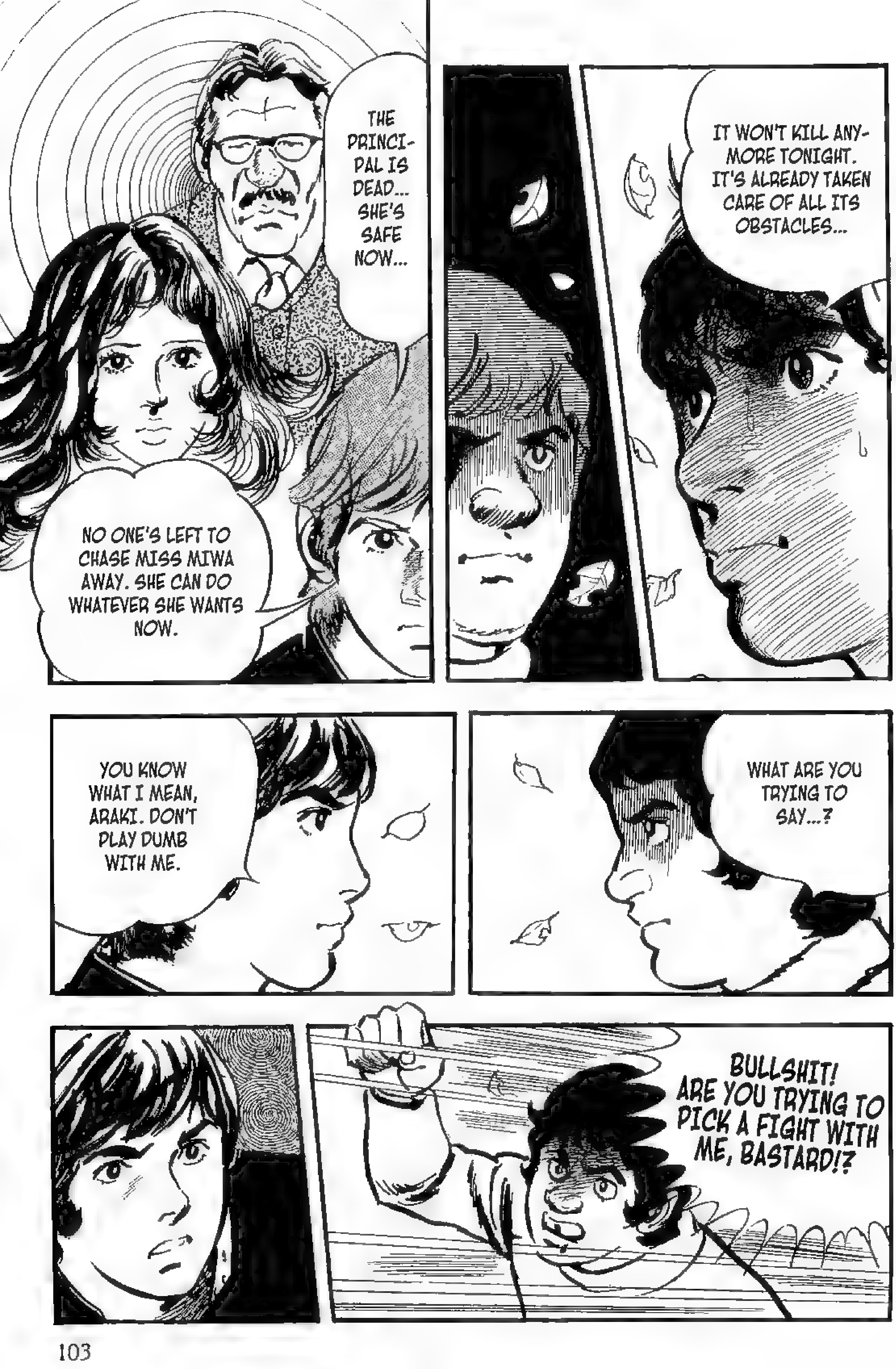

OH, MY, YU... W-WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU...?
I'M FINE, YOKO. I'M NOT HURT.
C-COME INSIDE! I'LL CALL A DOCTOR RIGHT AWAY!
I SAID I'M FINE...
I'M LOOKING FOR A DOG.
A DOG?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN ...?

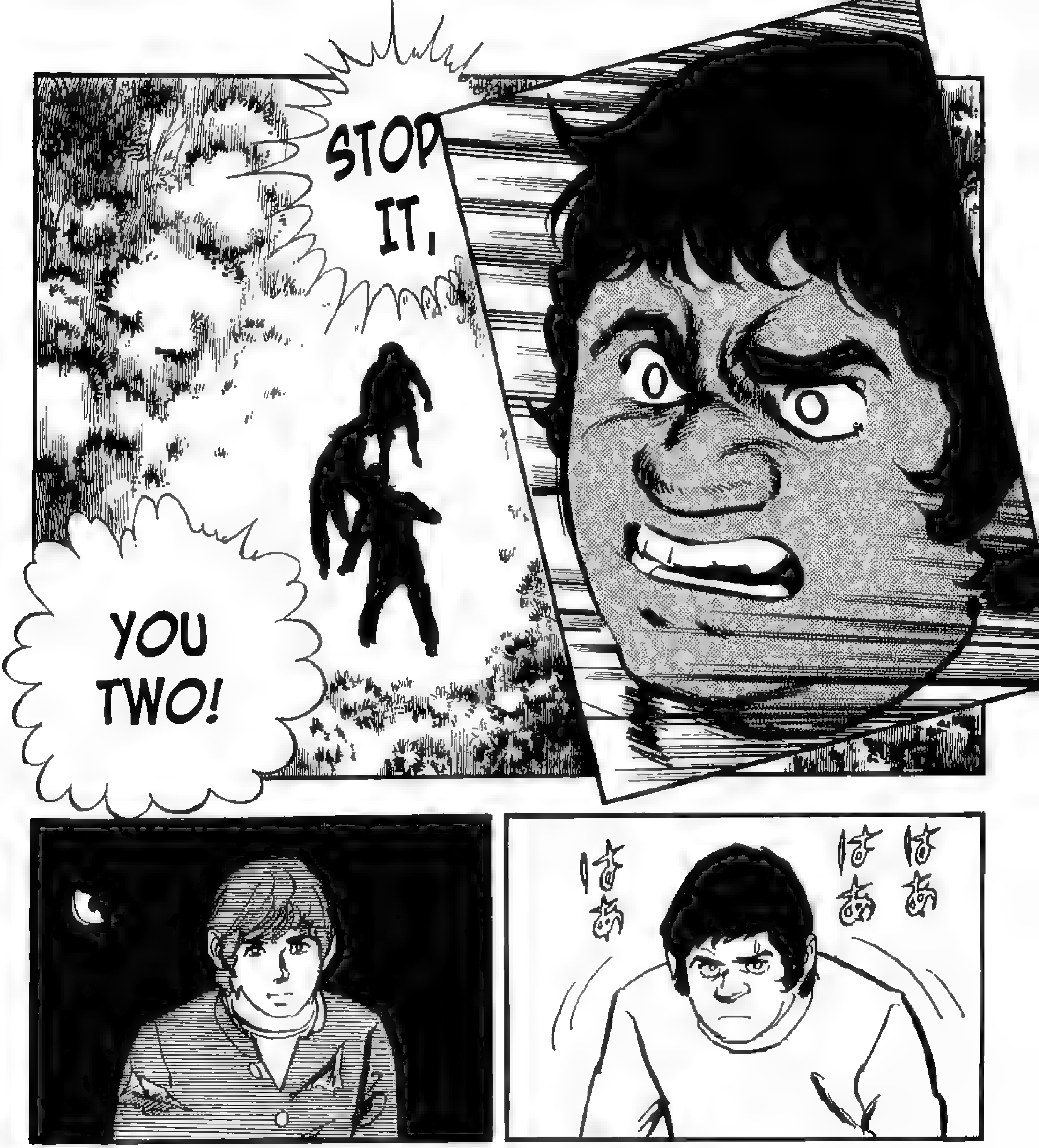

I CHASED A DOG THAT KILLED SOMEONE A FEW KILOMETERS HERE...
A DOG THAT KILLED SOME-ONE!?
IT BIT THE PRINCIPAL TO DEATH. LET ME LOOK IN YOUR HOUSE.
IS THAT DOG HERE? THE DOG THAT KILLED SOMEONE!?
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A DOG?
BROTHER!

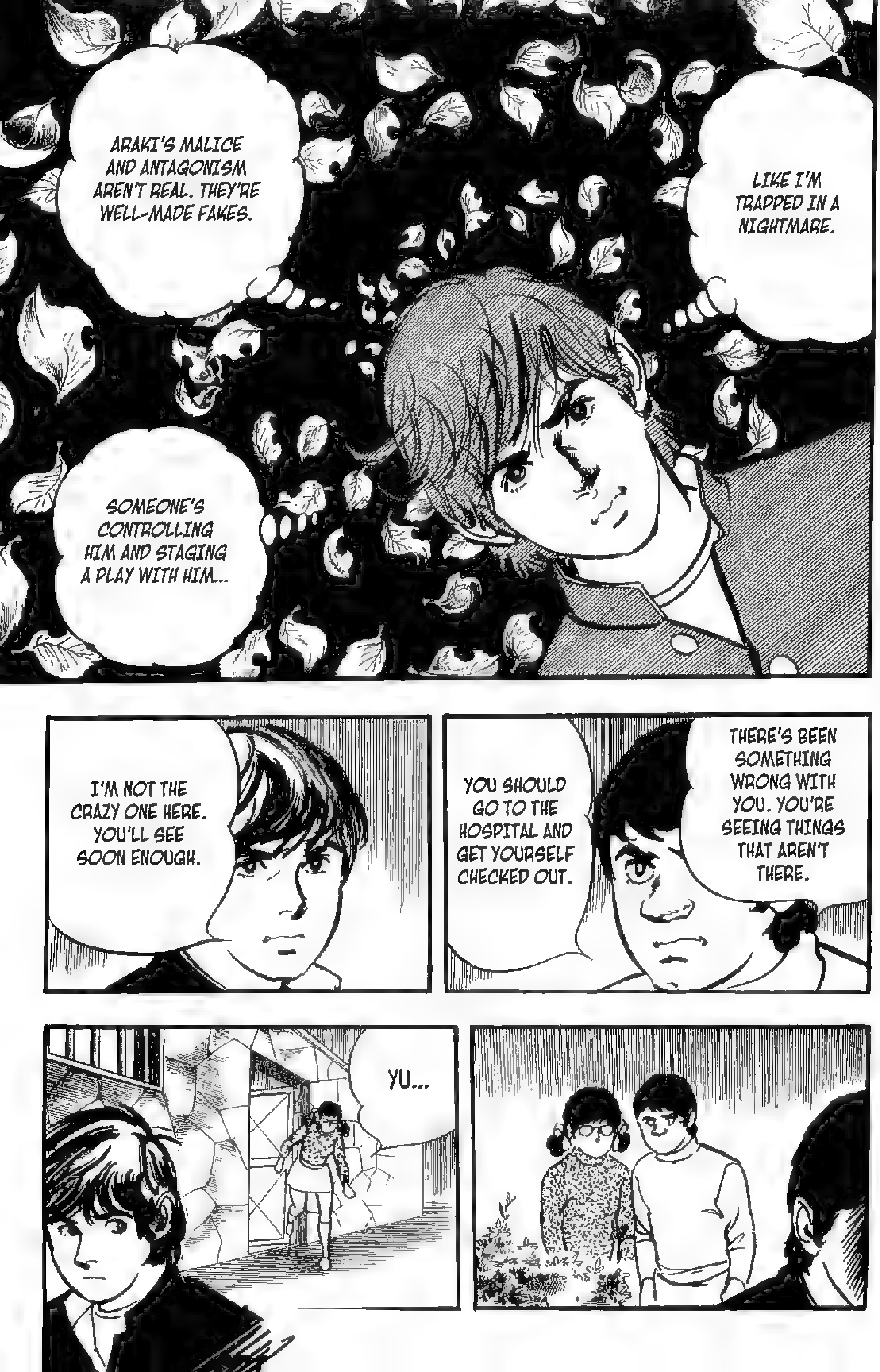

I'M SCARED!
I HEARD WHAT YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT...
DID THAT DOG REALLY RUN INTO MY HOUSE!?
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. CAN I LOOK FOR IT?
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS! WE SHOULD CALL THE POLICE, BROTHER!
GO RIGHT AHEAD!
SEARCH TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT.

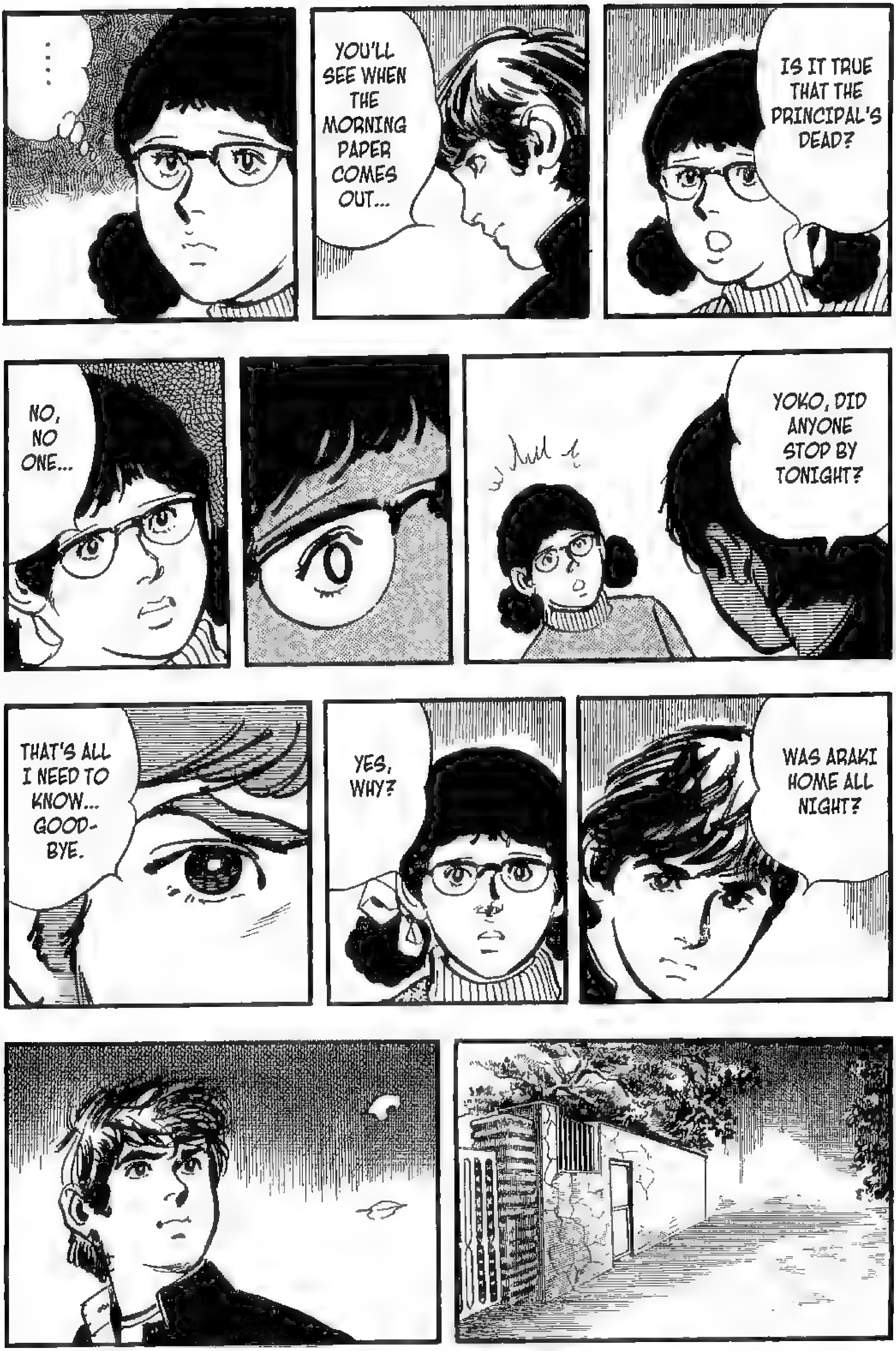

NO! YU CAN'T LOOK FOR IT ALONE!
YU, DON'T TRY AND CATCH THAT TERRIBLE DOG!
SHUT UP! LET GO!
YU, YOU'VE BEEN CRAZY LATELY.
YOU'VE BEEN SAYING THE STRANGEST THINGS...
JUST GO AHEAD AND LOOK IF YOU LIKE!
BROTHER!

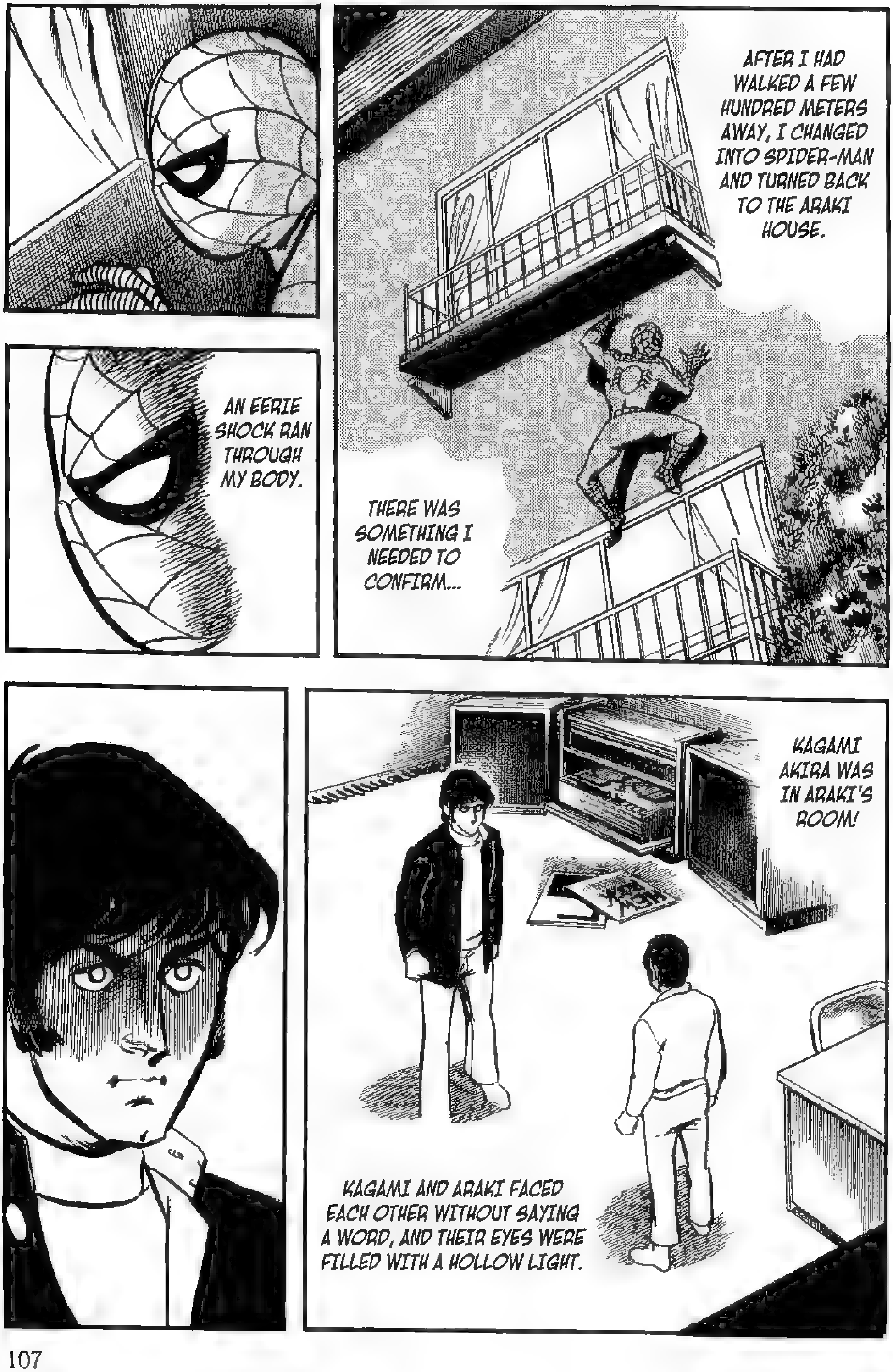

GUESS YOU DIDN'T FIND IT.
MY YARD'S PRETTY BIG, SO WHY DON'T YOU LOOK HARDER?
NO, THAT WON'T BE NECES-SARY...
THERE'S NO POINT IN PURSUING THE HELL-DOG ANY FURTHER...
SHOULD WE CALL THE POLICE, LIKE YOKO SAID?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
BECAUSE I KNOW WHERE IT IS...

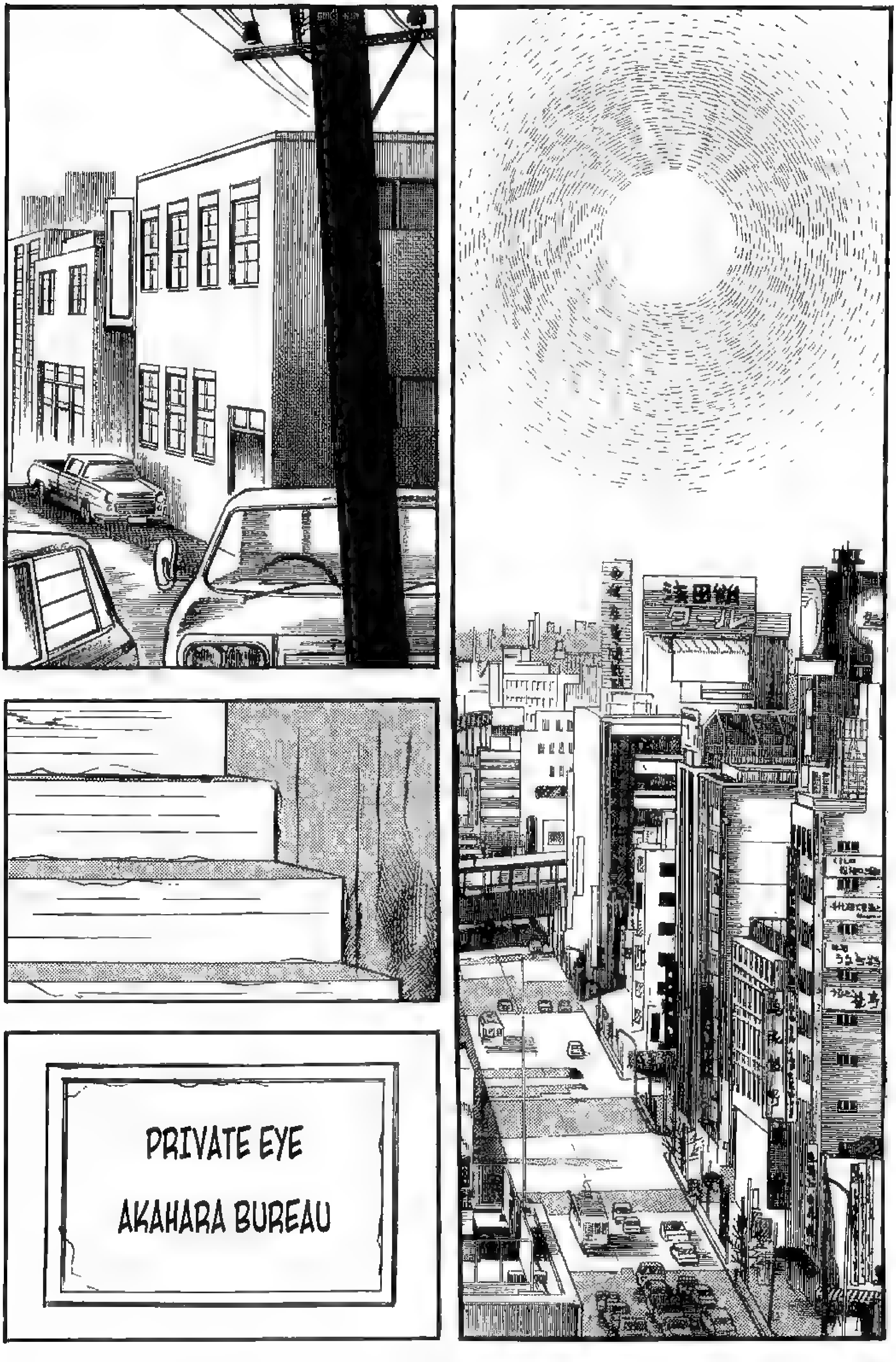

IT WON'T KILL ANYMORE TONIGHT. IT'S ALREADY TAKEN CARE OF ALL ITS OBSTACLES...
THE PRINCIPAL IS DEAD... SHE'S SAFE NOW...
NO ONE'S LEFT TO CHASE MISS MIWA AWAY. SHE CAN DO WHATEVER SHE WANTS NOW.
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY...?
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN, ARAKI. DON'T PLAY DUMB WITH ME.
BULLSHIT! ARE YOU TRYING TO PICK A FIGHT WITH ME, BASTARD!?

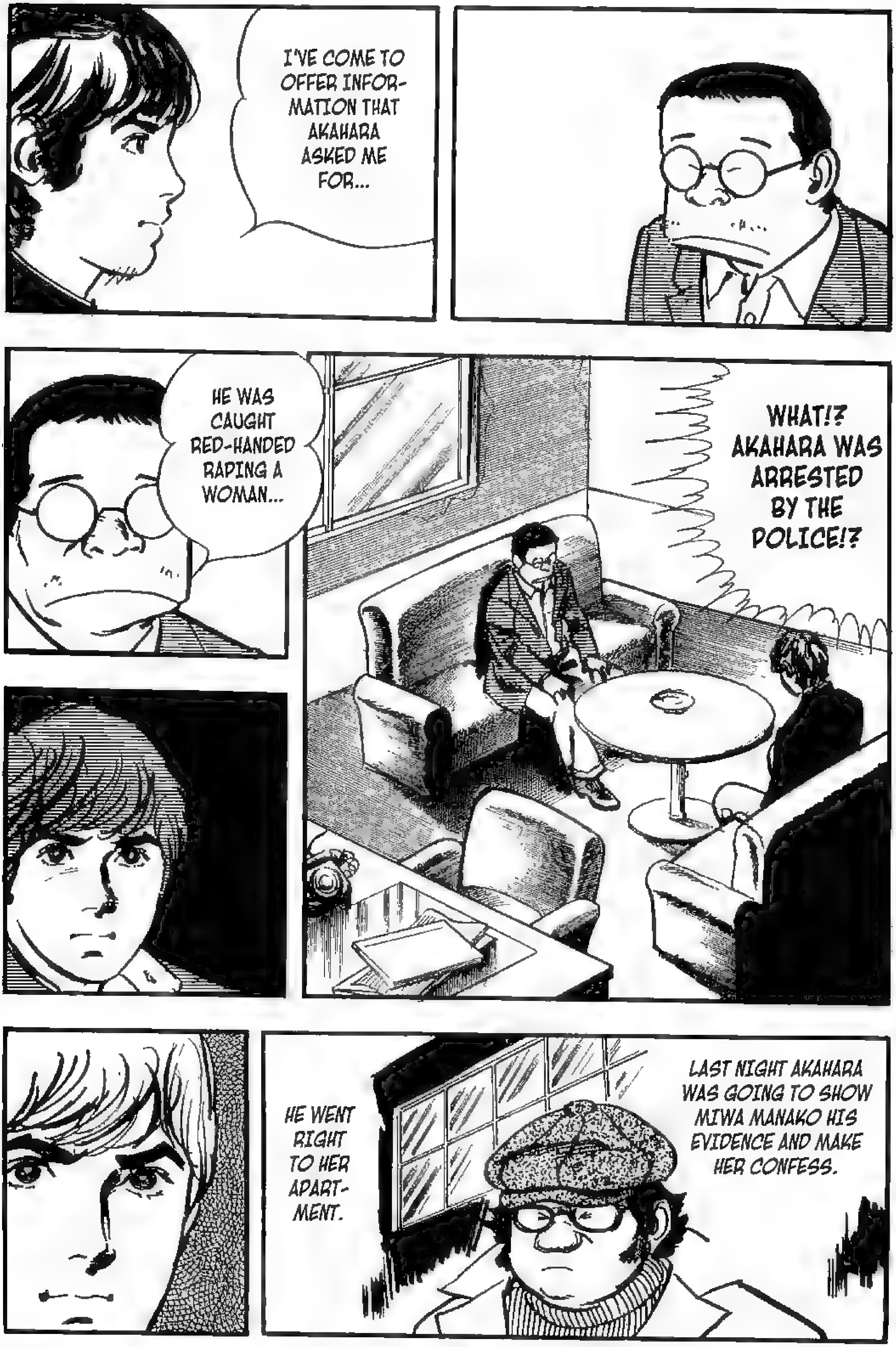

STOP IT, YOU TWO!
はあ はあ はあ
HE'S JUST LIKE A WILD DOG BARING ITS FANGS...
IT'S LIKE THIS IS SOME KIND OF HOLLOW SURREALISM...

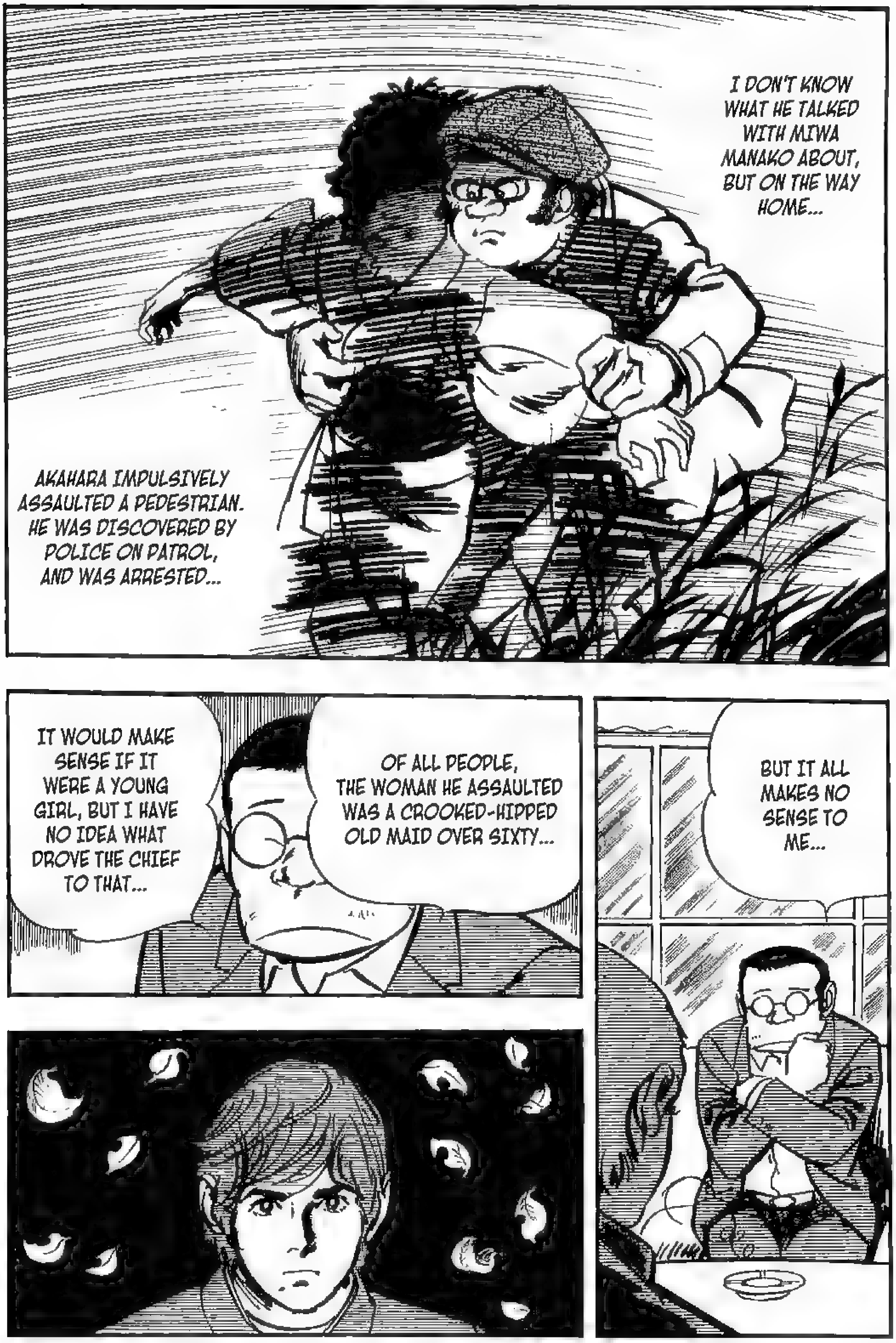

LIKE I'M TRAPPED IN A NIGHTMARE.
ARAKI'S MALICE AND ANTAGONISM AREN'T REAL. THEY'RE WELL-MADE FAKES.
SOMEONE'S CONTROLLING HIM AND STAGING A PLAY WITH HIM...
THERE'S BEEN SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU. YOU'RE SEEING THINGS THAT AREN'T THERE.
YOU SHOULD GO TO THE HOSPITAL AND GET YOURSELF CHECKED OUT.
I'M NOT THE CRAZY ONE HERE. YOU'LL SEE SOON ENOUGH.
YU...

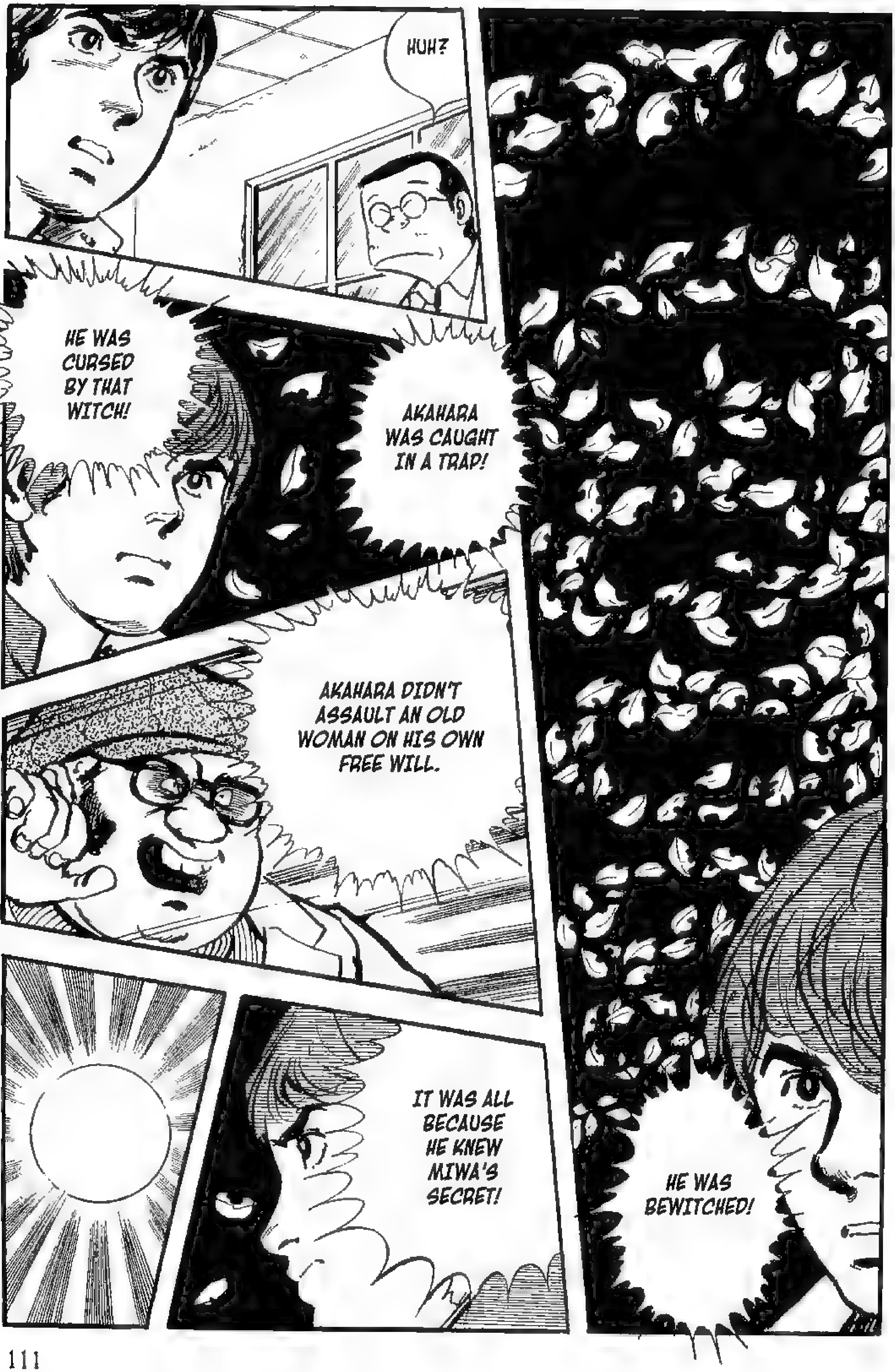

IS IT TRUE THAT THE PRINCIPAL'S DEAD?
YOU'LL SEE WHEN THE MORNING PAPER COMES OUT...
. . . . .
YOKO, DID ANYONE STOP BY TONIGHT?
NO, NO ONE...
WAS ARAKI HOME ALL NIGHT?
YES, WHY?
THAT'S ALL I NEED TO KNOW... GOOD-BYE.

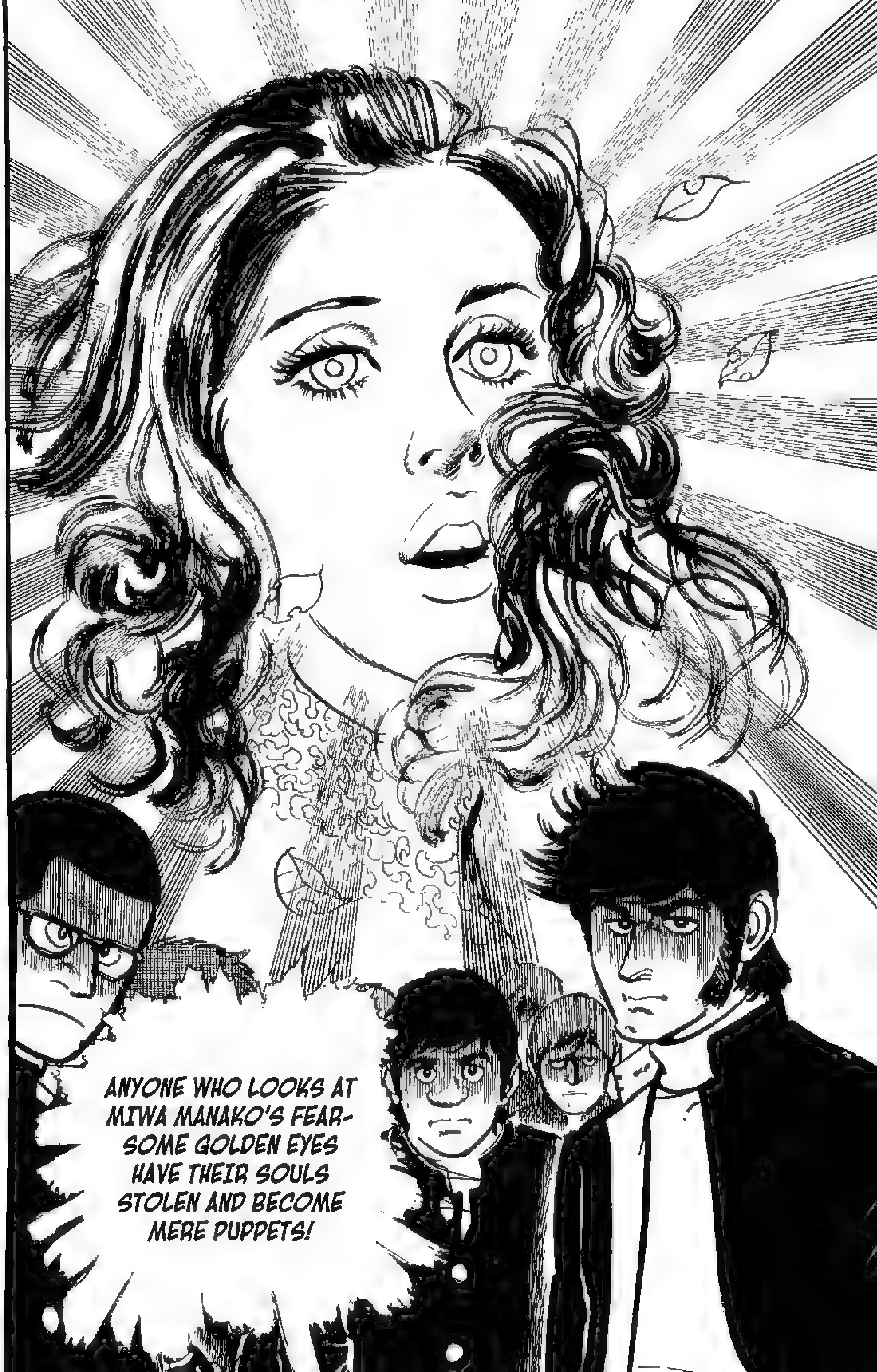

AFTER I HAD WALKED A FEW HUNDRED METERS AWAY, I CHANGED INTO SPIDER-MAN AND TURNED BACK TO THE ARAKI HOUSE.
THERE WAS SOMETHING I NEEDED TO CONFIRM...
AN EERIE SHOCK RAN THROUGH MY BODY.
KAGAMI AKIRA WAS IN ARAKI'S ROOM!
KAGAMI AND ARAKI FACED EACH OTHER WITHOUT SAYING A WORD, AND THEIR EYES WERE FILLED WITH A HOLLOW LIGHT.

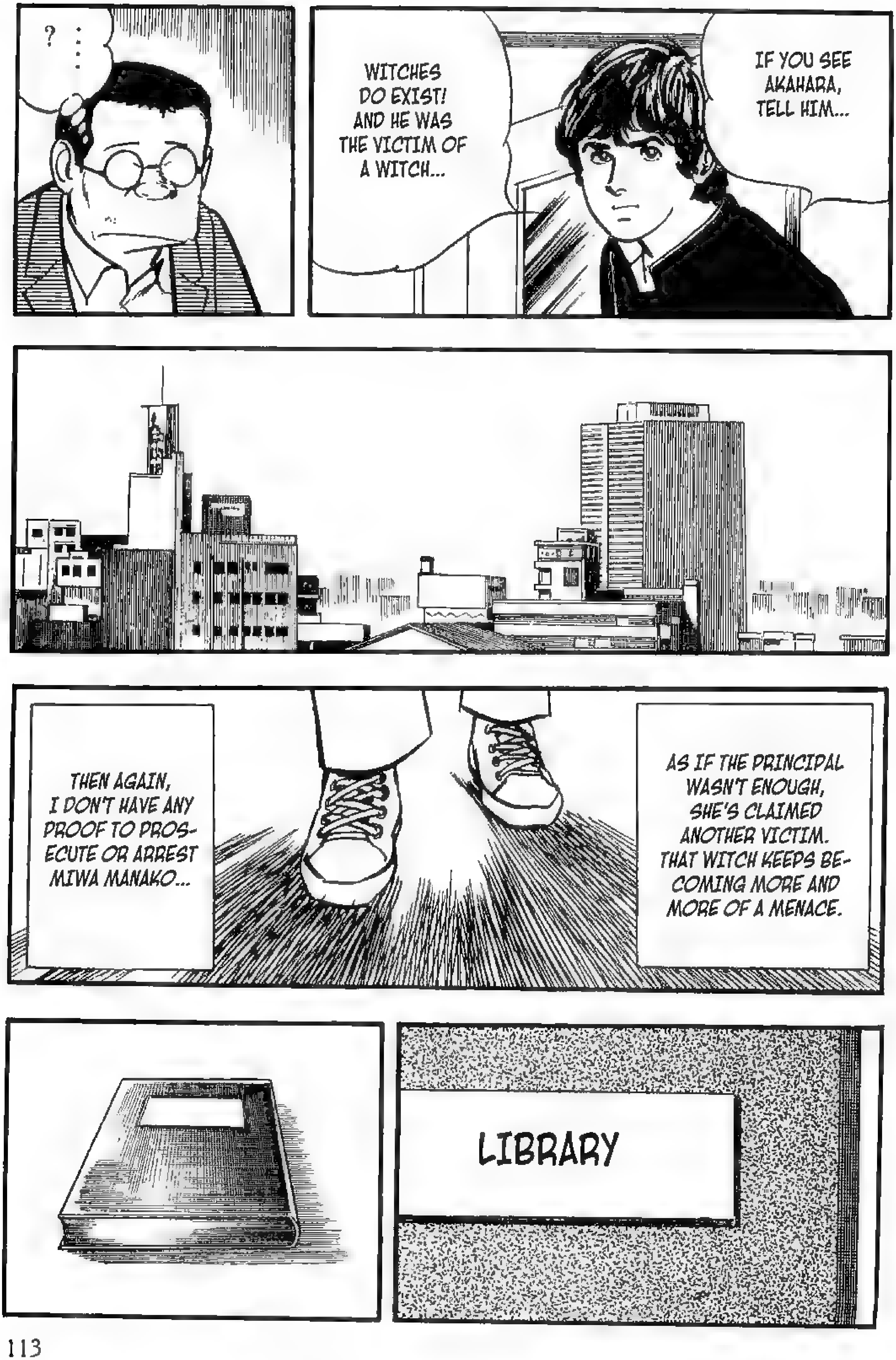

浅田飴
クール
PRIVATE EYE
AKAHARA BUREAU

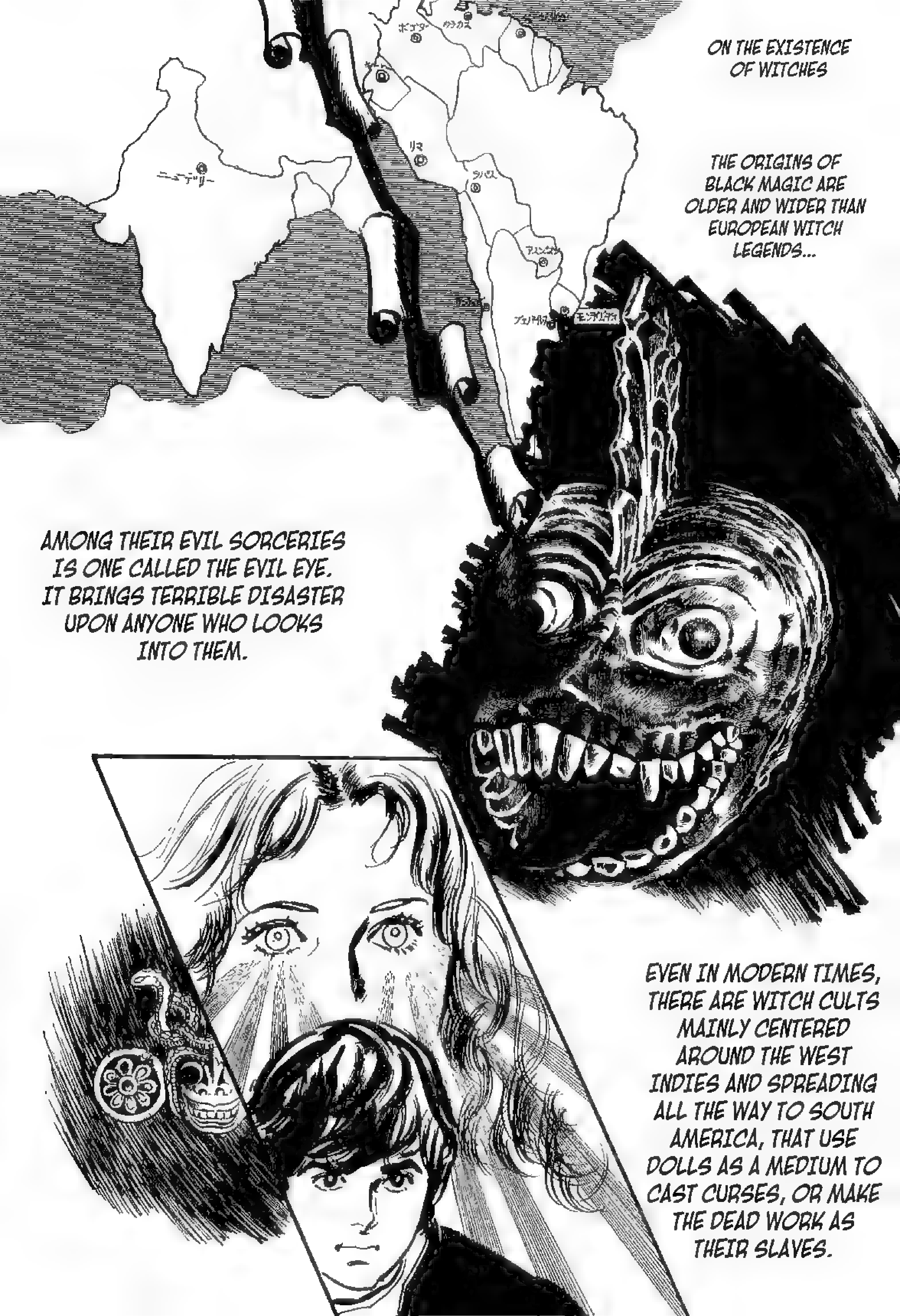

I'VE COME TO OFFER INFORMATION THAT AKAHARA ASKED ME FOR...
HE WAS CAUGHT RED-HANDED RAPING A WOMAN...
WHAT!? AKAHARA WAS ARRESTED BY THE POLICE!?
LAST NIGHT AKAHARA WAS GOING TO SHOW MIWA MANAKO HIS EVIDENCE AND MAKE HER CONFESS.
HE WENT RIGHT TO HER APARTMENT.

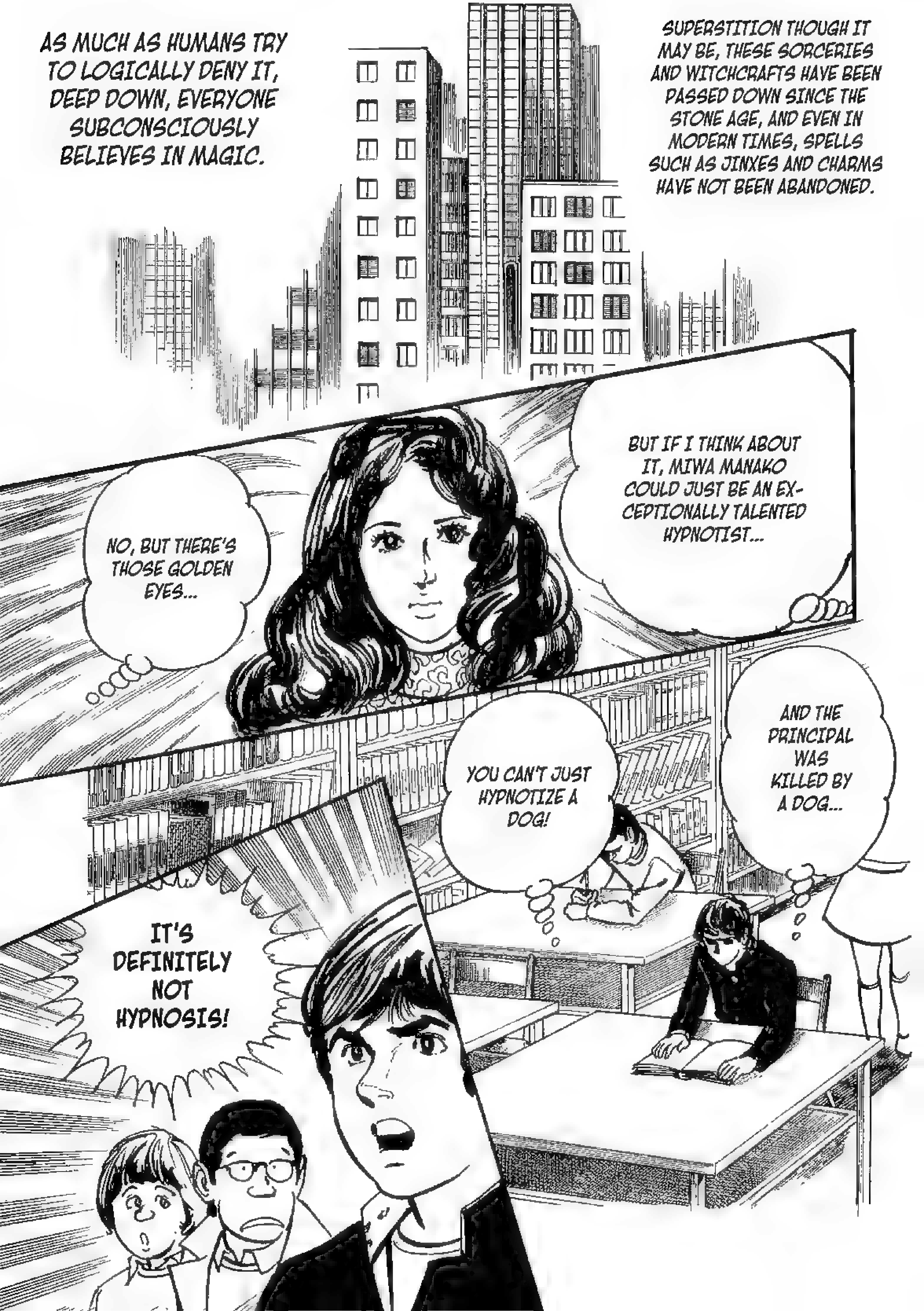

I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE TALKED WITH MIWA MANAKO ABOUT, BUT ON THE WAY HOME...
AKAHARA IMPULSIVELY ASSAULTED A PEDESTRIAN. HE WAS DISCOVERED BY POLICE ON PATROL, AND WAS ARRESTED...
OF ALL PEOPLE, THE WOMAN HE ASSAULTED WAS A CROOKED-HIPPED OLD MAID OVER SIXTY...
IT WOULD MAKE SENSE IF IT WERE A YOUNG GIRL, BUT I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT DROVE THE CHIEF TO THAT...
BUT IT ALL MAKES NO SENSE TO ME...

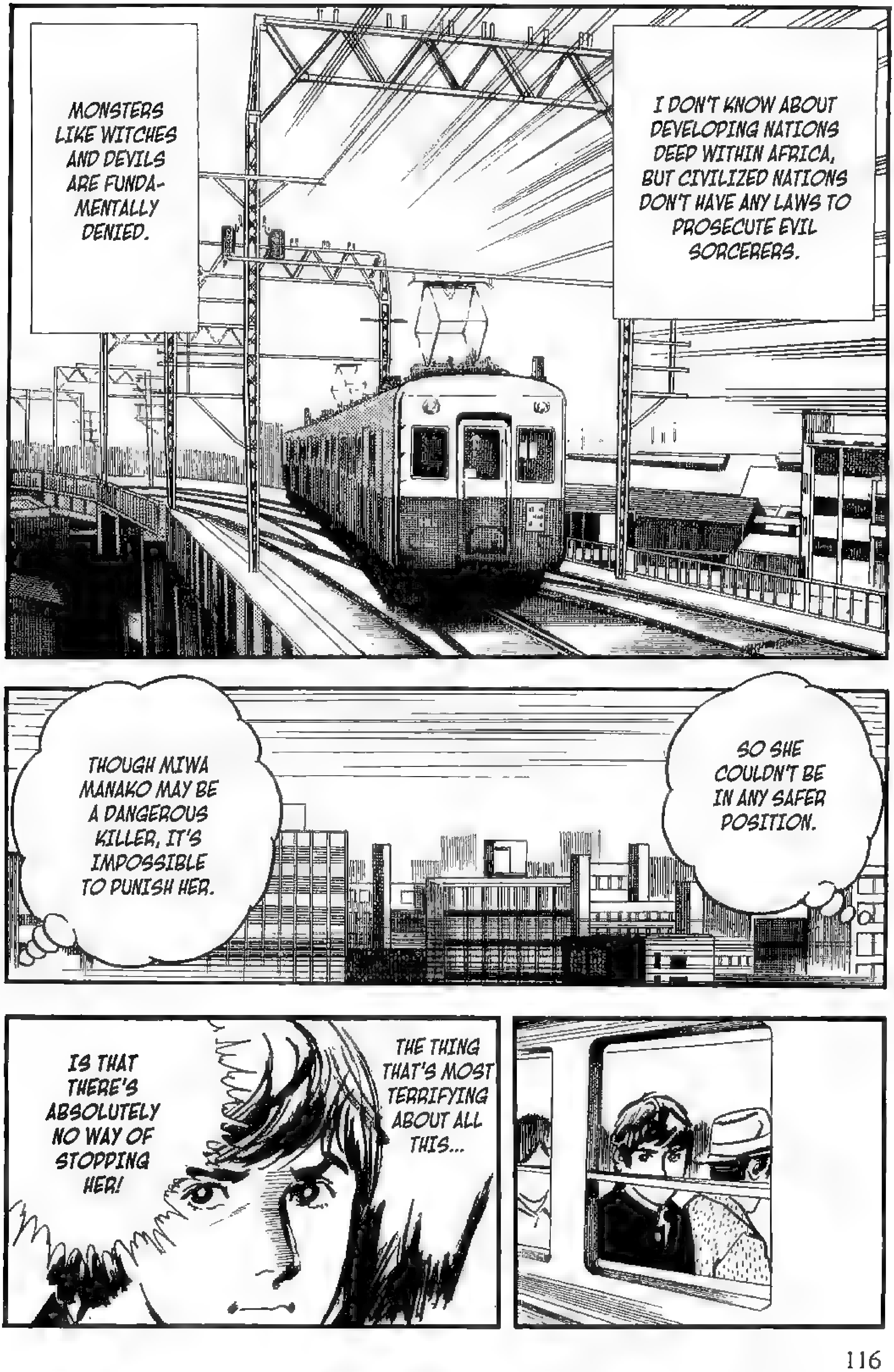

HUH?
AKAHARA WAS CAUGHT IN A TRAP!
HE WAS CURSED BY THAT WITCH!
AKAHARA DIDN'T ASSAULT AN OLD WOMAN ON HIS OWN FREE WILL.
HE WAS BEWITCHED!
IT WAS ALL BECAUSE HE KNEW MIWA'S SECRET!

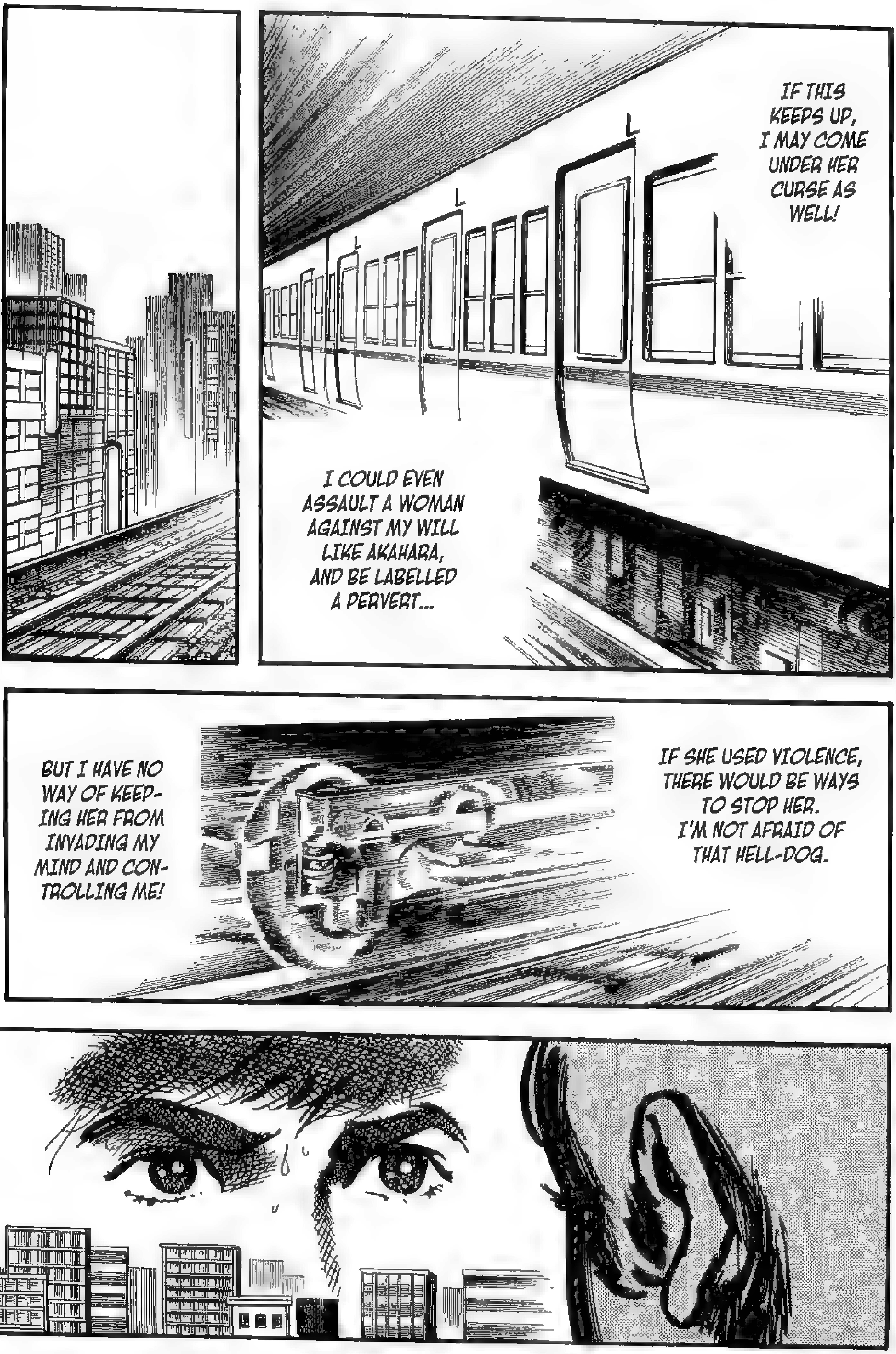

ANYONE WHO LOOKS AT MIWA MANAKO'S FEARSOME GOLDEN EYES HAVE THEIR SOULS STOLEN AND BECOME MERE PUPPETS!

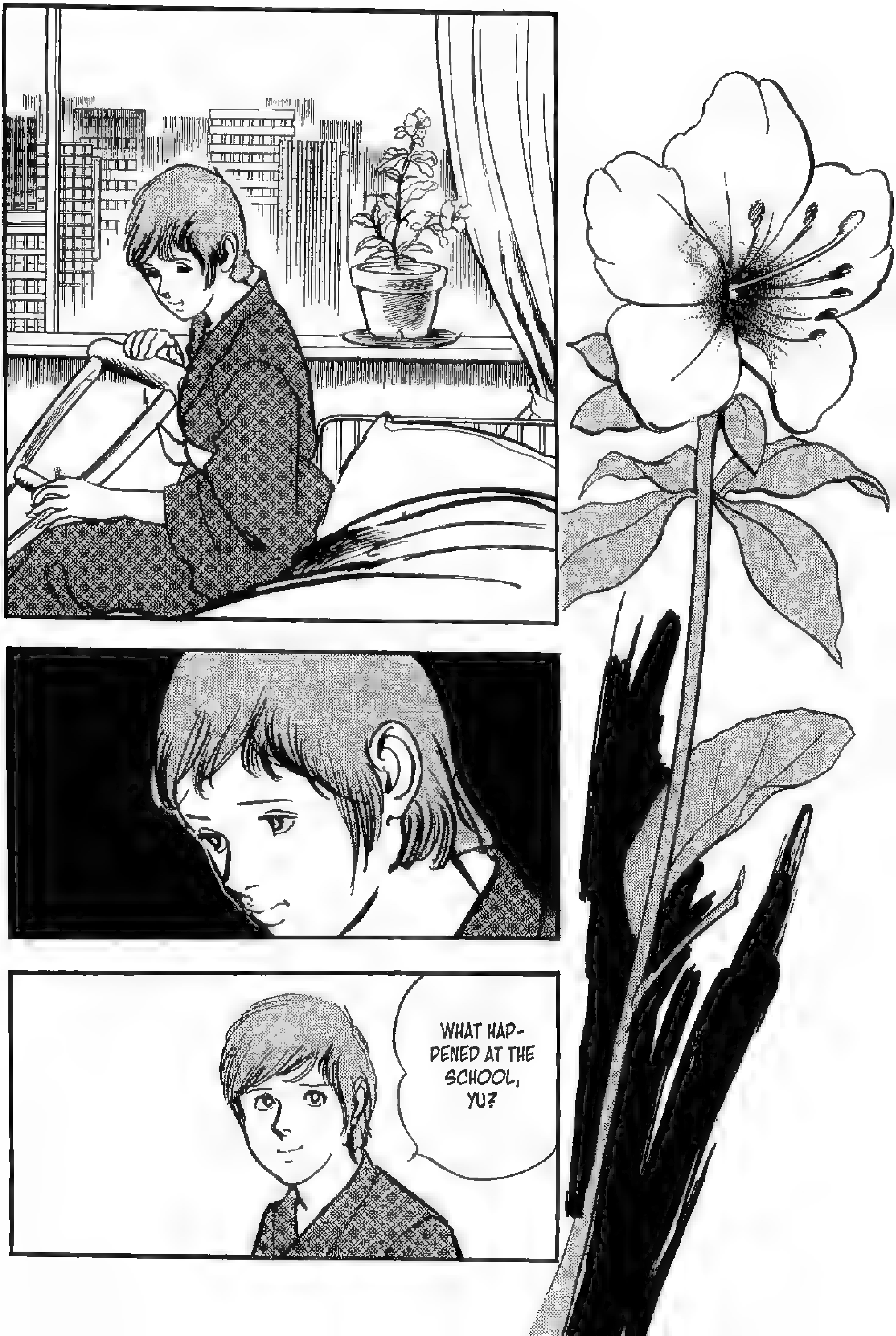

IF YOU SEE AKAHARA, TELL HIM...
WITCHES DO EXIST! AND HE WAS THE VICTIM OF A WITCH...
? ...
AS IF THE PRINCIPAL WASN'T ENOUGH, SHE'S CLAIMED ANOTHER VICTIM. THAT WITCH KEEPS BECOMING MORE AND MORE OF A MENACE.
THEN AGAIN, I DON'T HAVE ANY PROOF TO PROSECUTE OR ARREST MIWA MANAKO...
LIBRARY

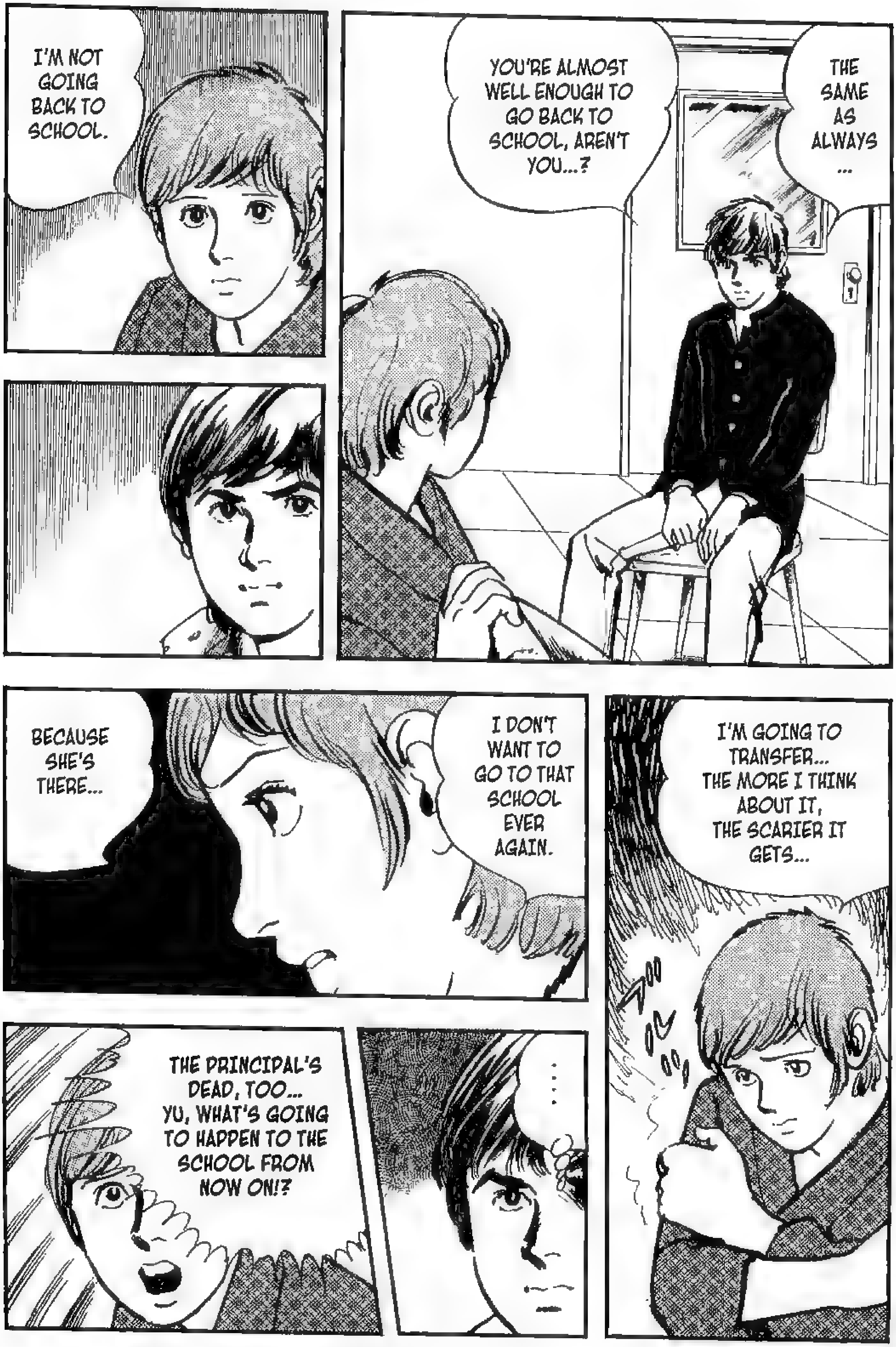

ON THE EXISTENCE OF WITCHES
THE ORIGINS OF BLACK MAGIC ARE OLDER AND WIDER THAN EUROPEAN WITCH LEGENDS...
ボゴタ
カラカス
リマ
ラパス
アスンシオン
ブエノスアイレス
モンテビデオ
ニューデリー
AMONG THEIR EVIL SORCERIES IS ONE CALLED THE EVIL EYE. IT BRINGS TERRIBLE DISASTER UPON ANYONE WHO LOOKS INTO THEM.
EVEN IN MODERN TIMES, THERE ARE WITCH CULTS MAINLY CENTERED AROUND THE WEST INDIES AND SPREADING ALL THE WAY TO SOUTH AMERICA, THAT USE DOLLS AS A MEDIUM TO CAST CURSES, OR MAKE THE DEAD WORK AS THEIR SLAVES.

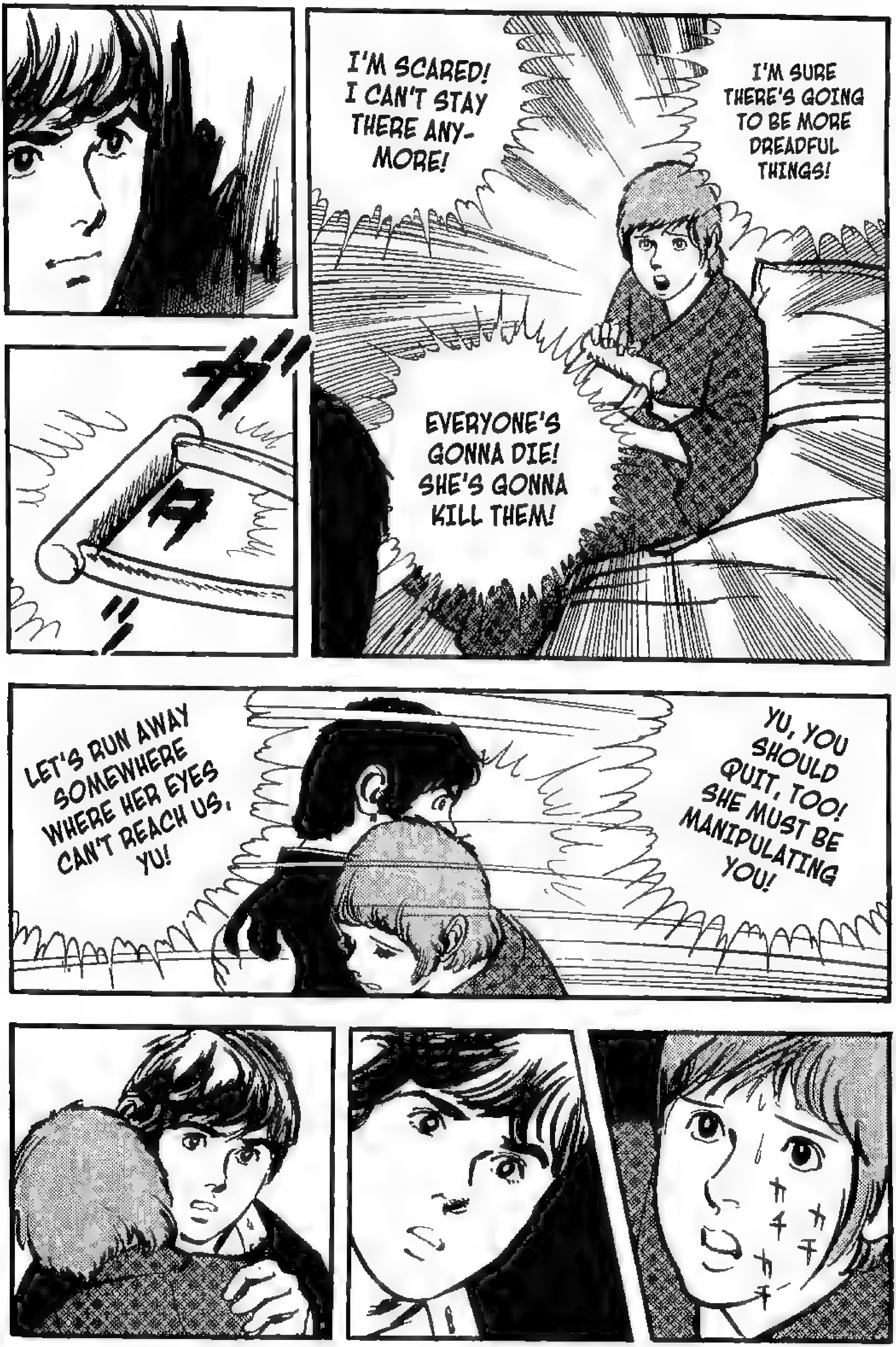

AS MUCH AS HUMANS TRY TO LOGICALLY DENY IT, DEEP DOWN, EVERYONE SUBCONSCIOUSLY BELIEVES IN MAGIC.
SUPERSTITION THOUGH IT MAY BE, THESE SORCERIES AND WITCHCRAFTS HAVE BEEN PASSED DOWN SINCE THE STONE AGE, AND EVEN IN MODERN TIMES, SPELLS SUCH AS JINXES AND CHARMS HAVE NOT BEEN ABANDONED.
BUT IF I THINK ABOUT IT, MIWA MANAKO COULD JUST BE AN EXCEPTIONALLY TALENTED HYPNOTIST...
NO, BUT THERE'S THOSE GOLDEN EYES...
AND THE PRINCIPAL WAS KILLED BY A DOG...
YOU CAN'T JUST HYPNOTIZE A DOG!
IT'S DEFINITELY NOT HYPNOSIS!


MONSTERS LIKE WITCHES AND DEVILS ARE FUNDAMENTALLY DENIED.
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT DEVELOPING NATIONS DEEP WITHIN AFRICA, BUT CIVILIZED NATIONS DON'T HAVE ANY LAWS TO PROSECUTE EVIL SORCERERS.
THOUGH MIWA MANAKO MAY BE A DANGEROUS KILLER, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO PUNISH HER.
SO SHE COULDN'T BE IN ANY SAFER POSITION.
THE THING THAT'S MOST TERRIFYING ABOUT ALL THIS...
IS THAT THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NO WAY OF STOPPING HER!


IF THIS KEEPS UP, I MAY COME UNDER HER CURSE AS WELL!
I COULD EVEN ASSAULT A WOMAN AGAINST MY WILL LIKE AKAHARA, AND BE LABELLED A PERVERT...
IF SHE USED VIOLENCE, THERE WOULD BE WAYS TO STOP HER. I'M NOT AFRAID OF THAT HELL-DOG.
BUT I HAVE NO WAY OF KEEPING HER FROM INVADING MY MIND AND CONTROLLING ME!


WHAT HAPPENED AT THE SCHOOL, YU?


THE SAME AS ALWAYS ...
YOU'RE ALMOST WELL ENOUGH TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL, AREN'T YOU...?
I'M NOT GOING BACK TO SCHOOL.
I'M GOING TO TRANSFER... THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT, THE SCARIER IT GETS...
I DON'T WANT TO GO TO THAT SCHOOL EVER AGAIN.
BECAUSE SHE'S THERE...
....
THE PRINCIPAL'S DEAD, TOO... YU, WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO THE SCHOOL FROM NOW ON!?


I'M SURE THERE'S GOING TO BE MORE DREADFUL THINGS!
I'M SCARED! I CAN'T STAY THERE ANYMORE!
EVERYONE'S GONNA DIE! SHE'S GONNA KILL THEM!
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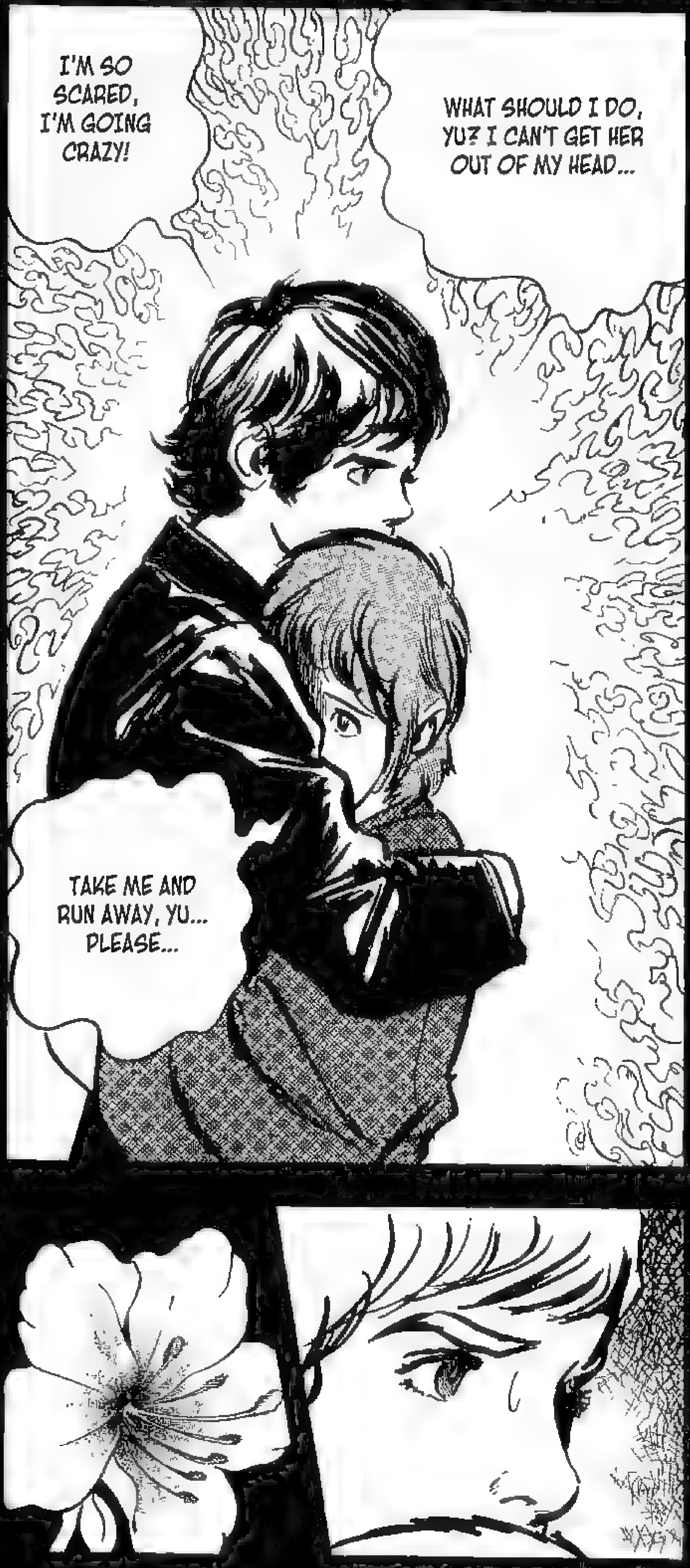
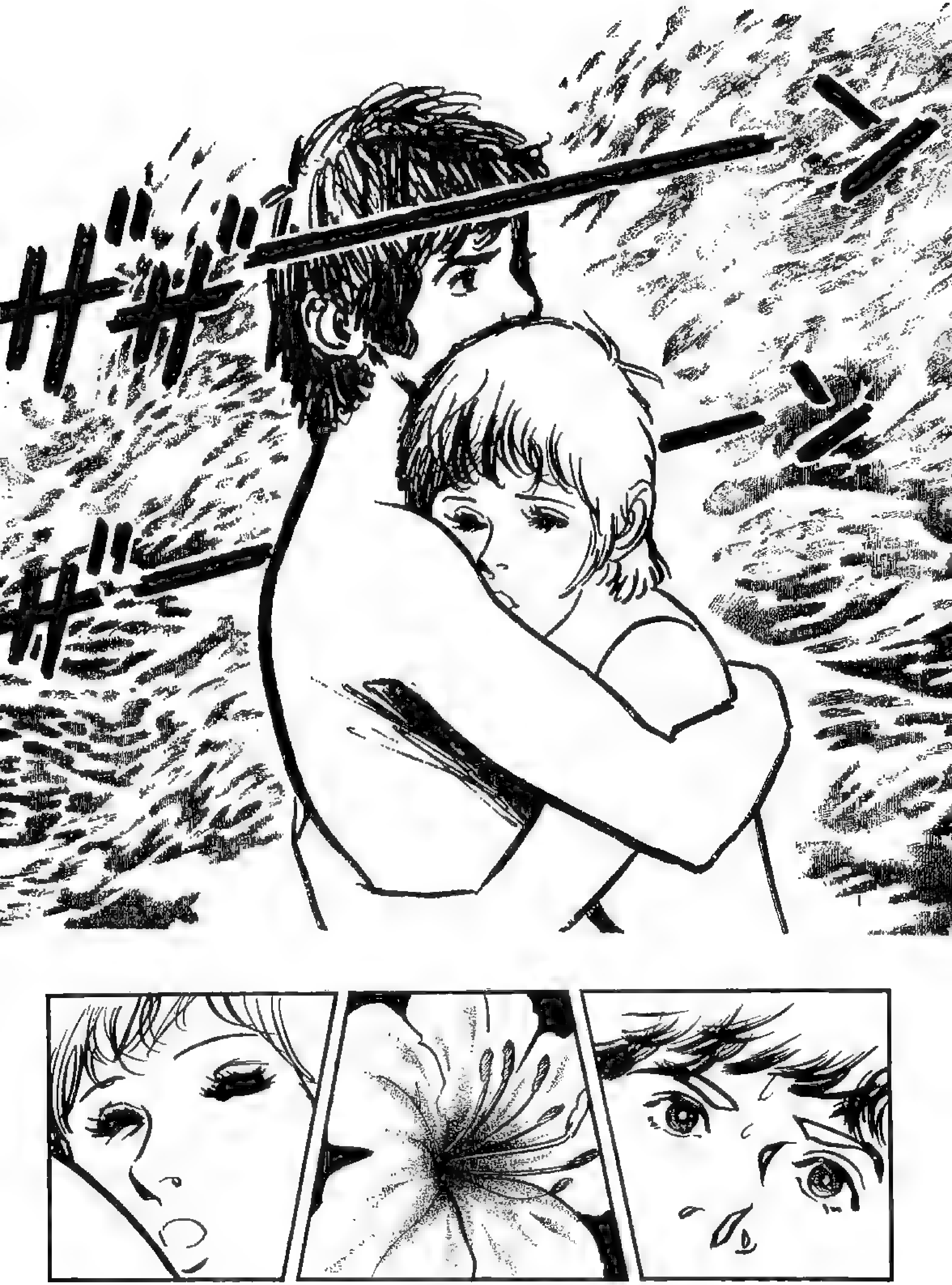
YU, YOU SHOULD QUIT, TOO! SHE MUST BE MANIPULATING YOU!
LET'S RUN AWAY SOMEWHERE WHERE HER EYES CAN'T REACH US, YU!


WHAT SHOULD I DO, YU? I CAN'T GET HER OUT OF MY HEAD...
I'M SO SCARED, I'M GOING CRAZY!
TAKE ME AND RUN AWAY, YU... PLEASE...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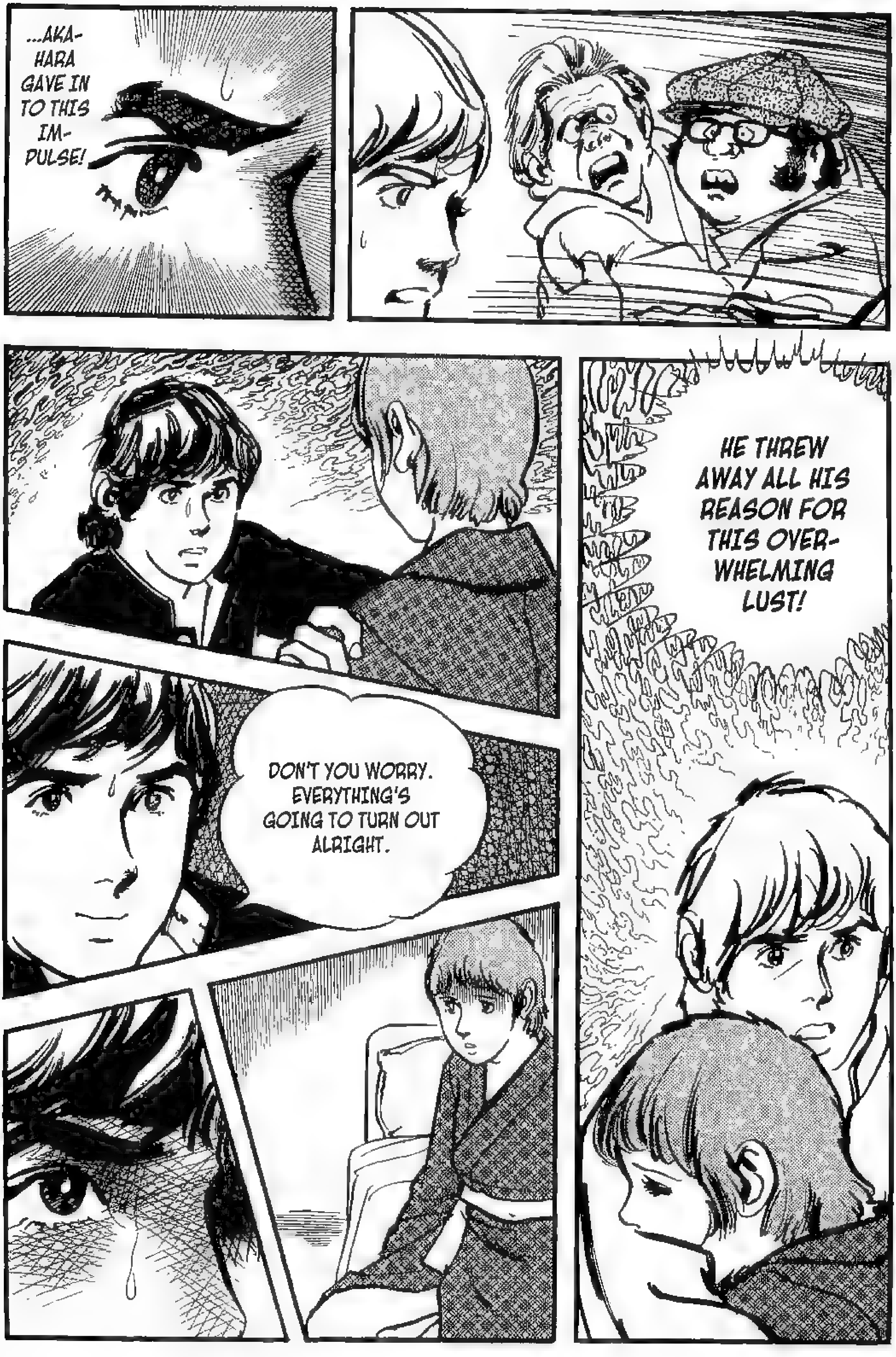
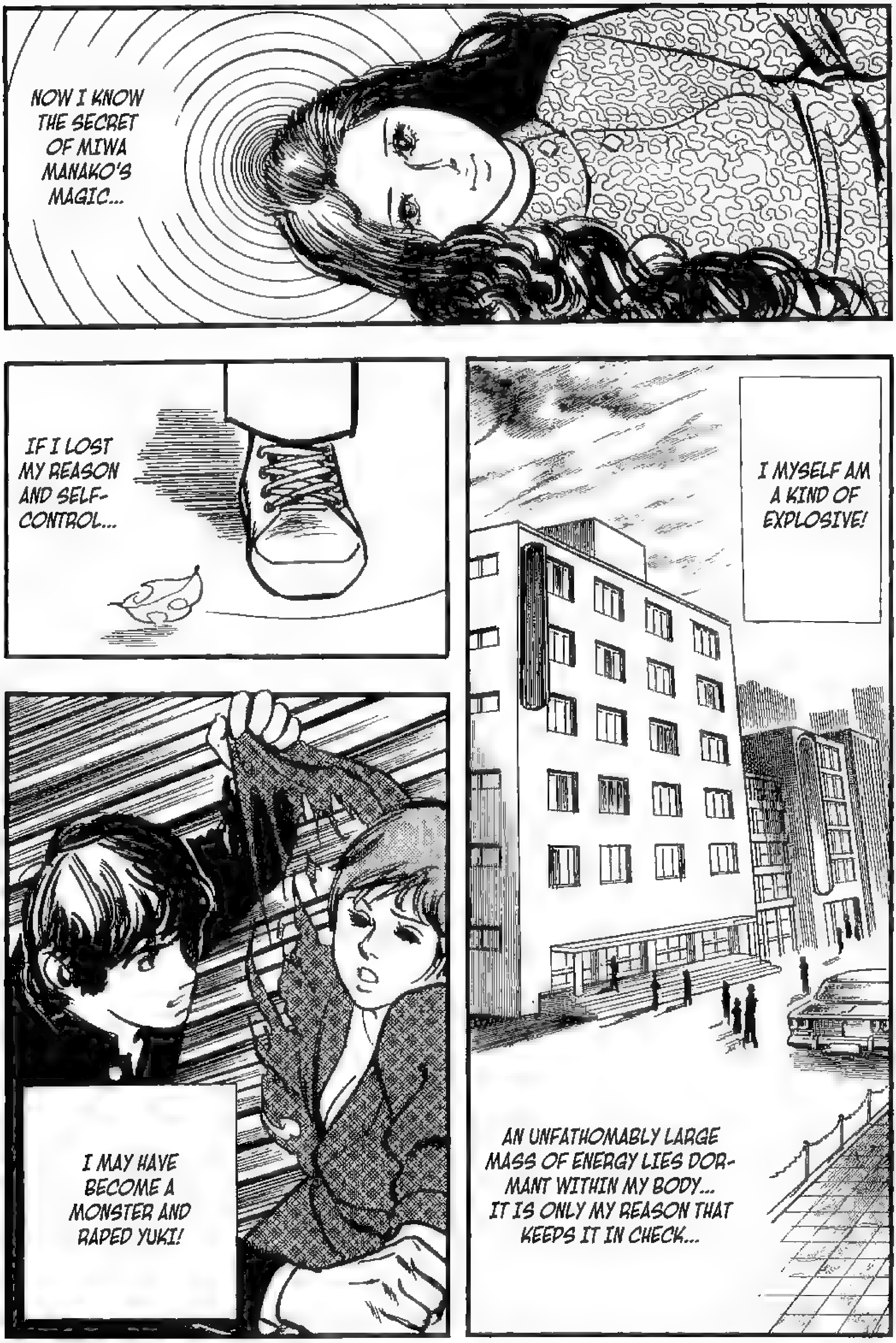
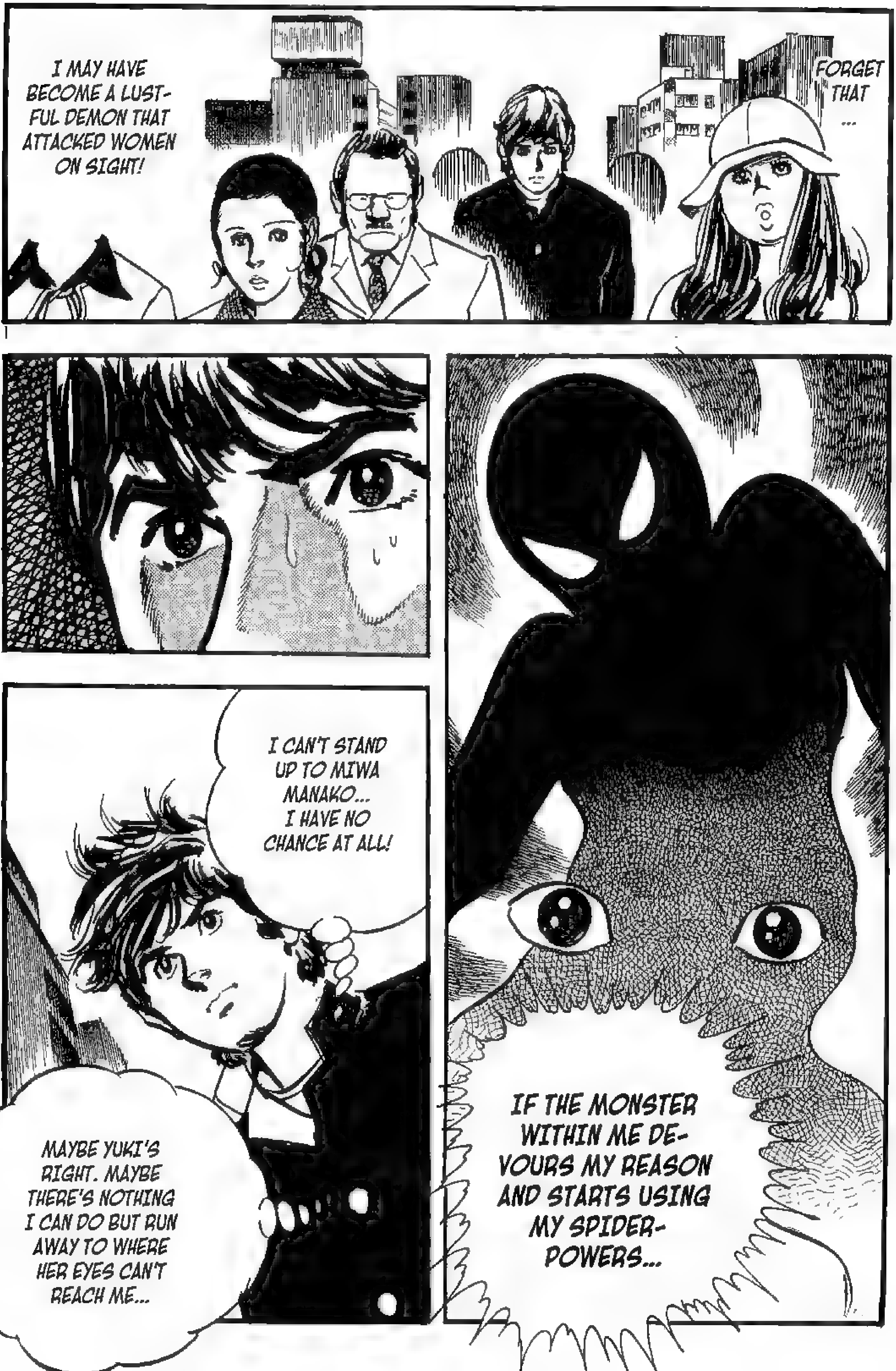
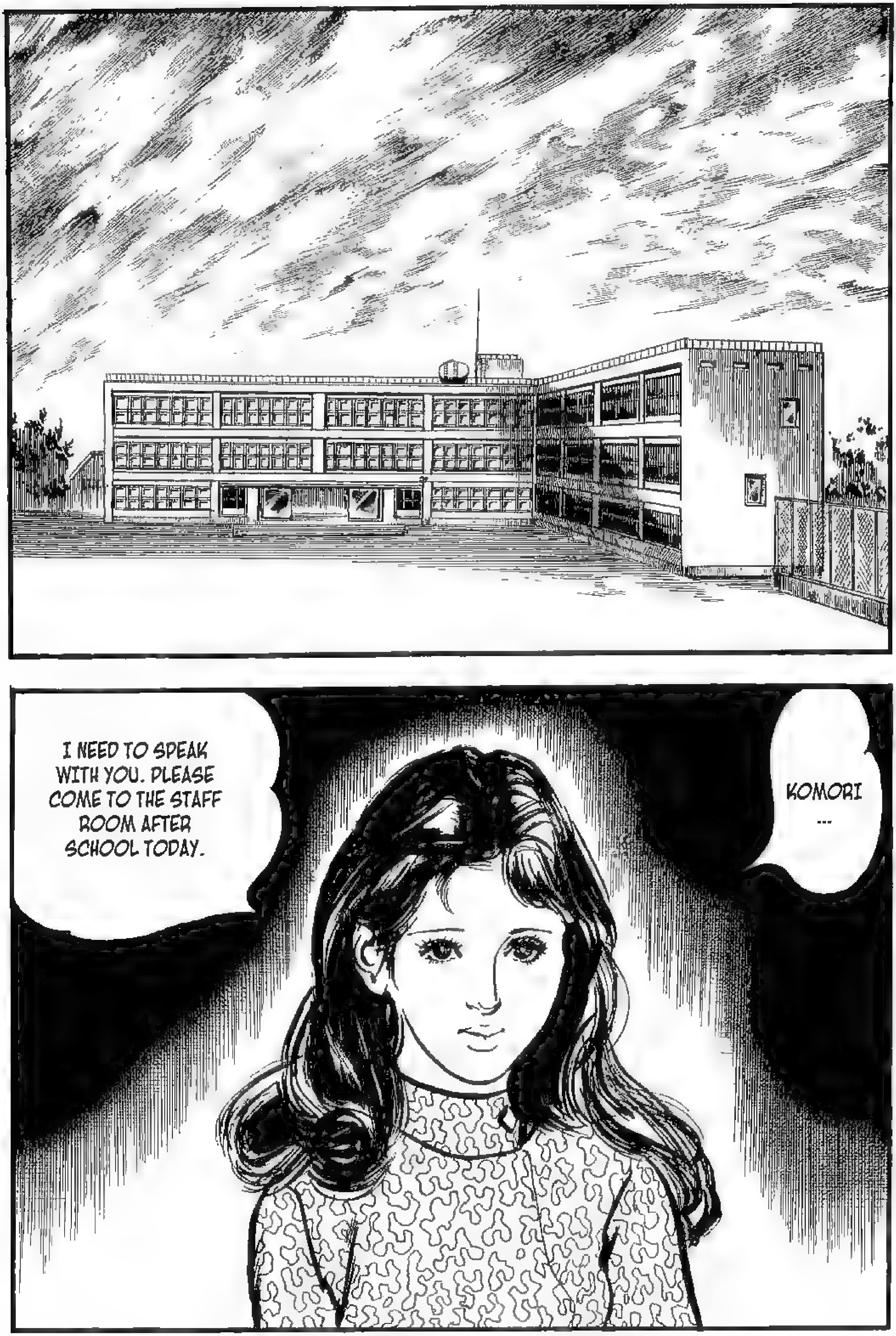
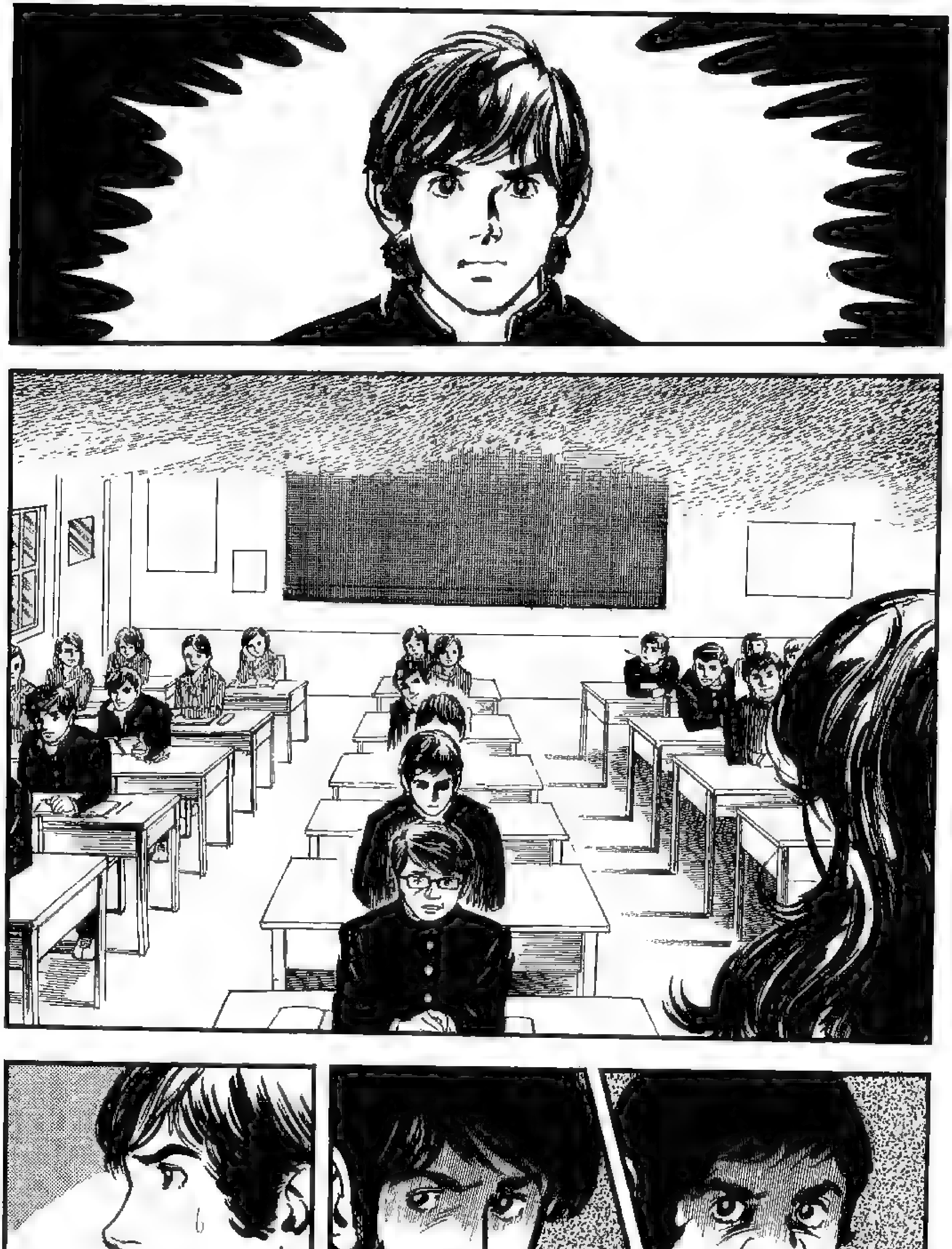
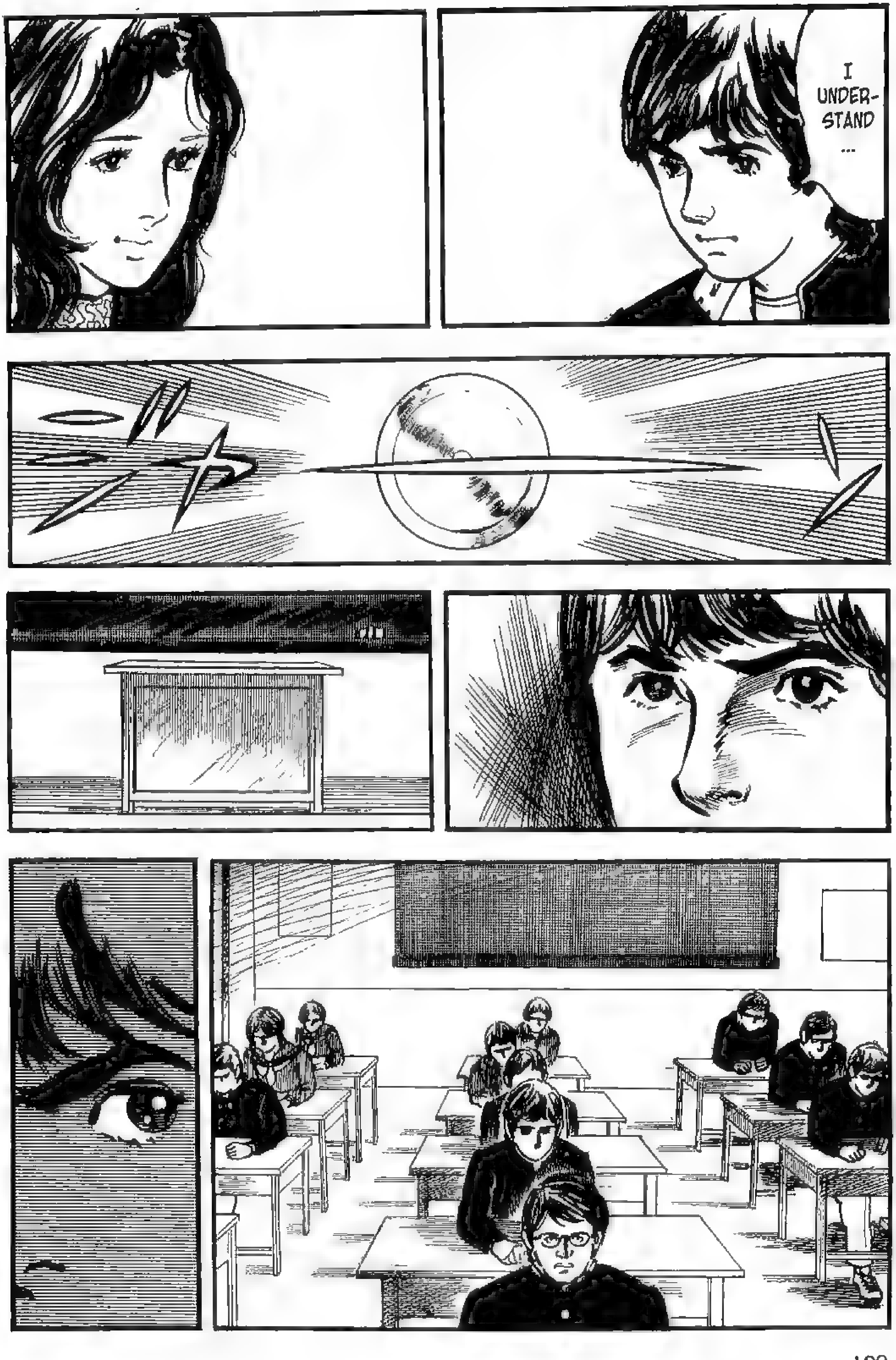

...AKAHARA GAVE IN TO THIS IMPULSE!
HE THREW AWAY ALL HIS REASON FOR THIS OVERWHELMING LUST!
DON'T YOU WORRY. EVERYTHING'S GOING TO TURN OUT ALRIGHT.

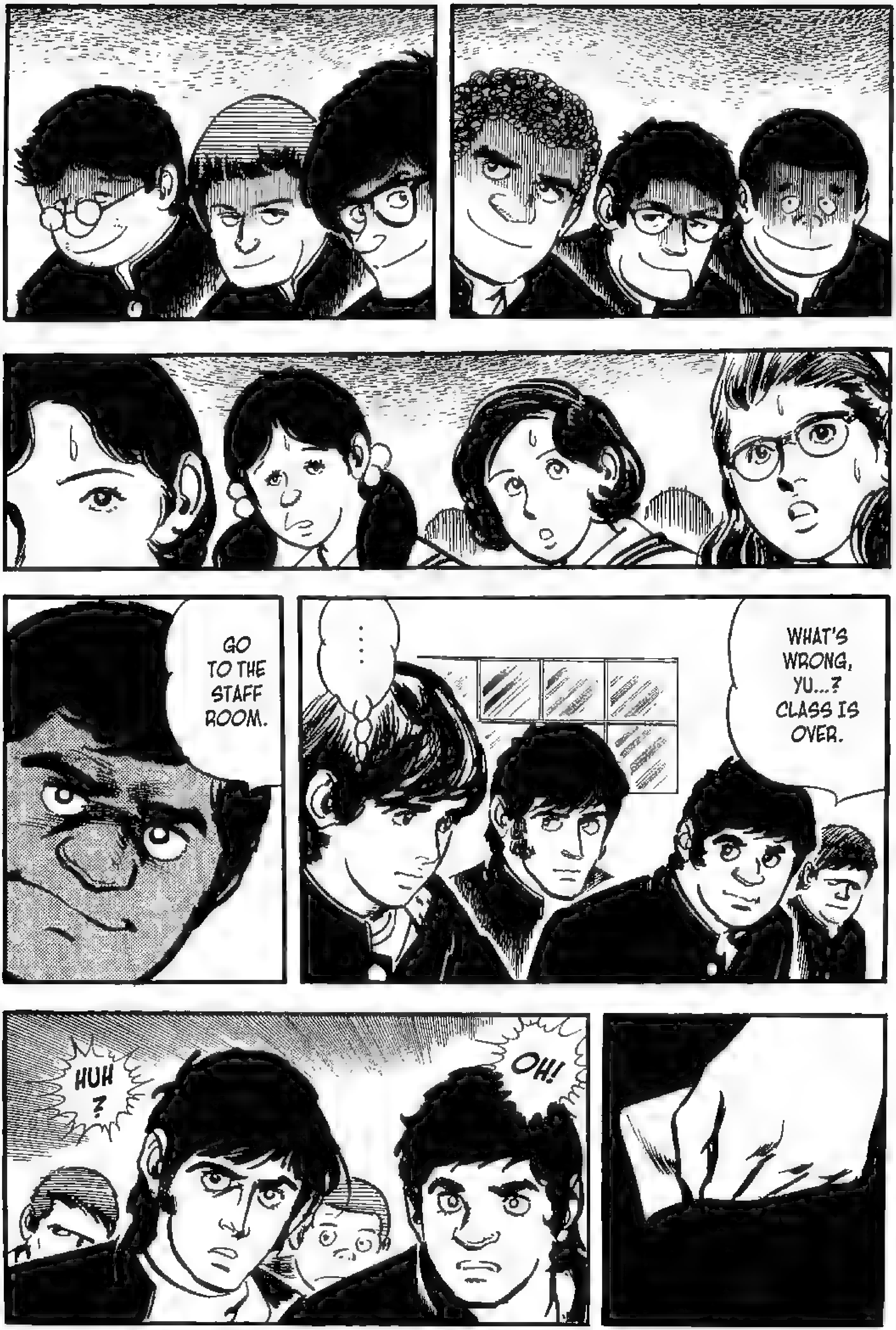

NOW I KNOW THE SECRET OF MIWA MANAKO'S MAGIC...
IF I LOST MY REASON AND SELF-CONTROL...
I MAY HAVE BECOME A MONSTER AND RAPED YUKI!
I MYSELF AM A KIND OF EXPLOSIVE!
AN UNFATHOMABLY LARGE MASS OF ENERGY LIES DORMANT WITHIN MY BODY... IT IS ONLY MY REASON THAT KEEPS IT IN CHECK...

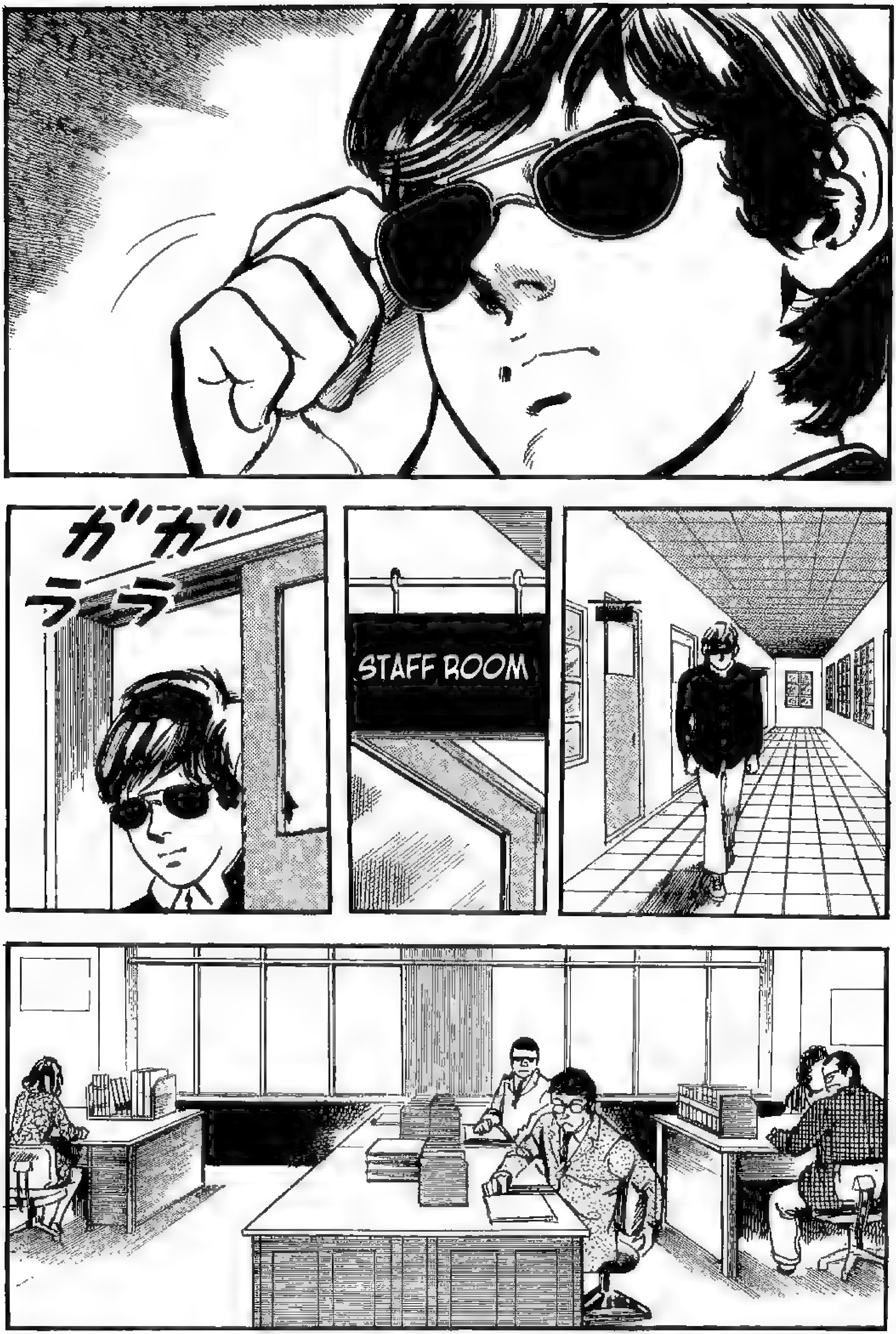

I MAY HAVE BECOME A LUSTFUL DEMON THAT ATTACKED WOMEN ON SIGHT!
FORGET THAT ...
I CAN'T STAND UP TO MIWA MANAKO... I HAVE NO CHANCE AT ALL!
MAYBE YUKI'S RIGHT. MAYBE THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO BUT RUN AWAY TO WHERE HER EYES CAN'T REACH ME...
IF THE MONSTER WITHIN ME DEVOURS MY REASON AND STARTS USING MY SPIDER-POWERS...


KOMORI ...
I NEED TO SPEAK WITH YOU. PLEASE COME TO THE STAFF ROOM AFTER SCHOOL TODAY.




I UNDERSTAND ...


GO TO THE STAFF ROOM.
....
WHAT'S WRONG, YU...? CLASS IS OVER.
HUH ?
OH!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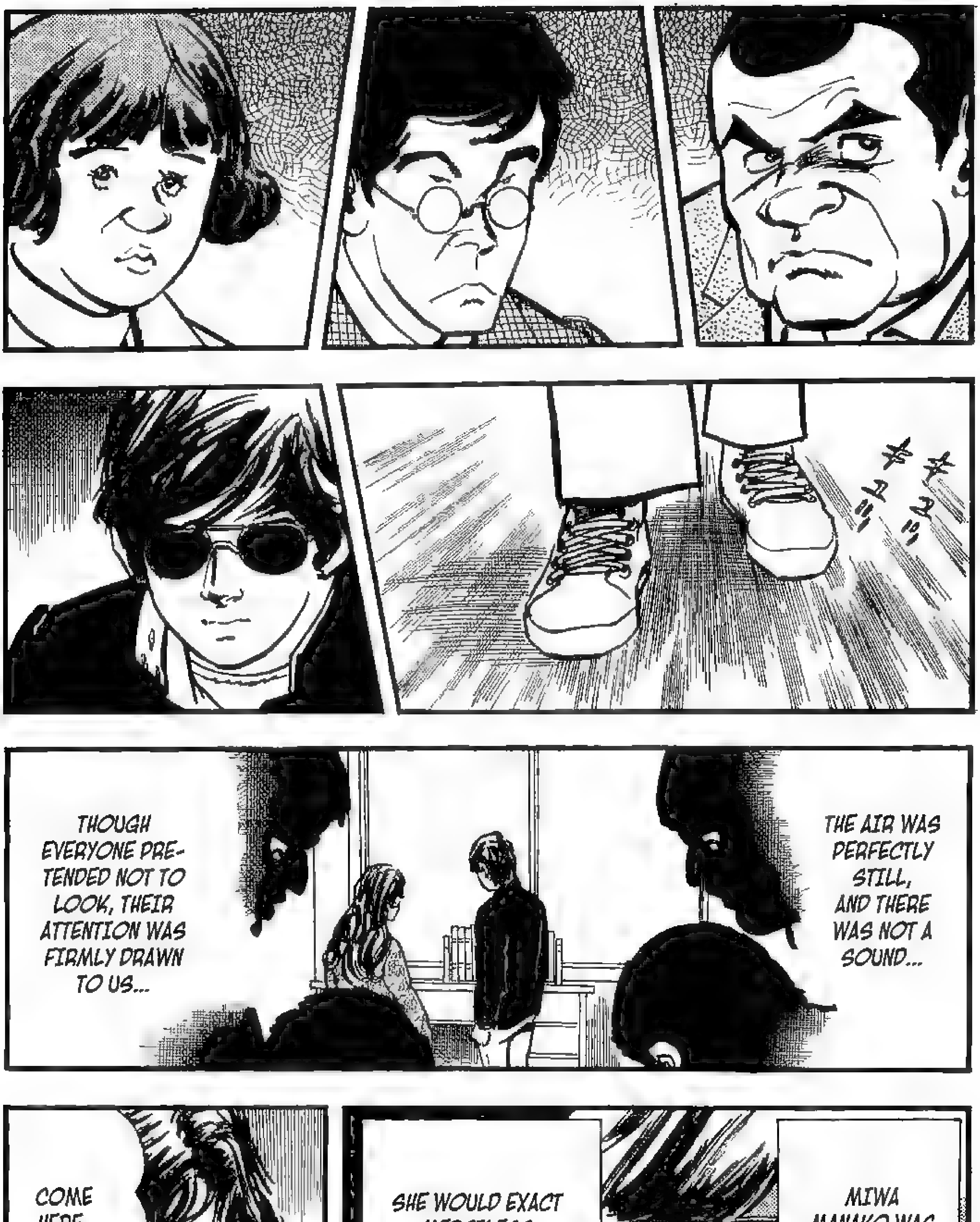
STAFF ROOM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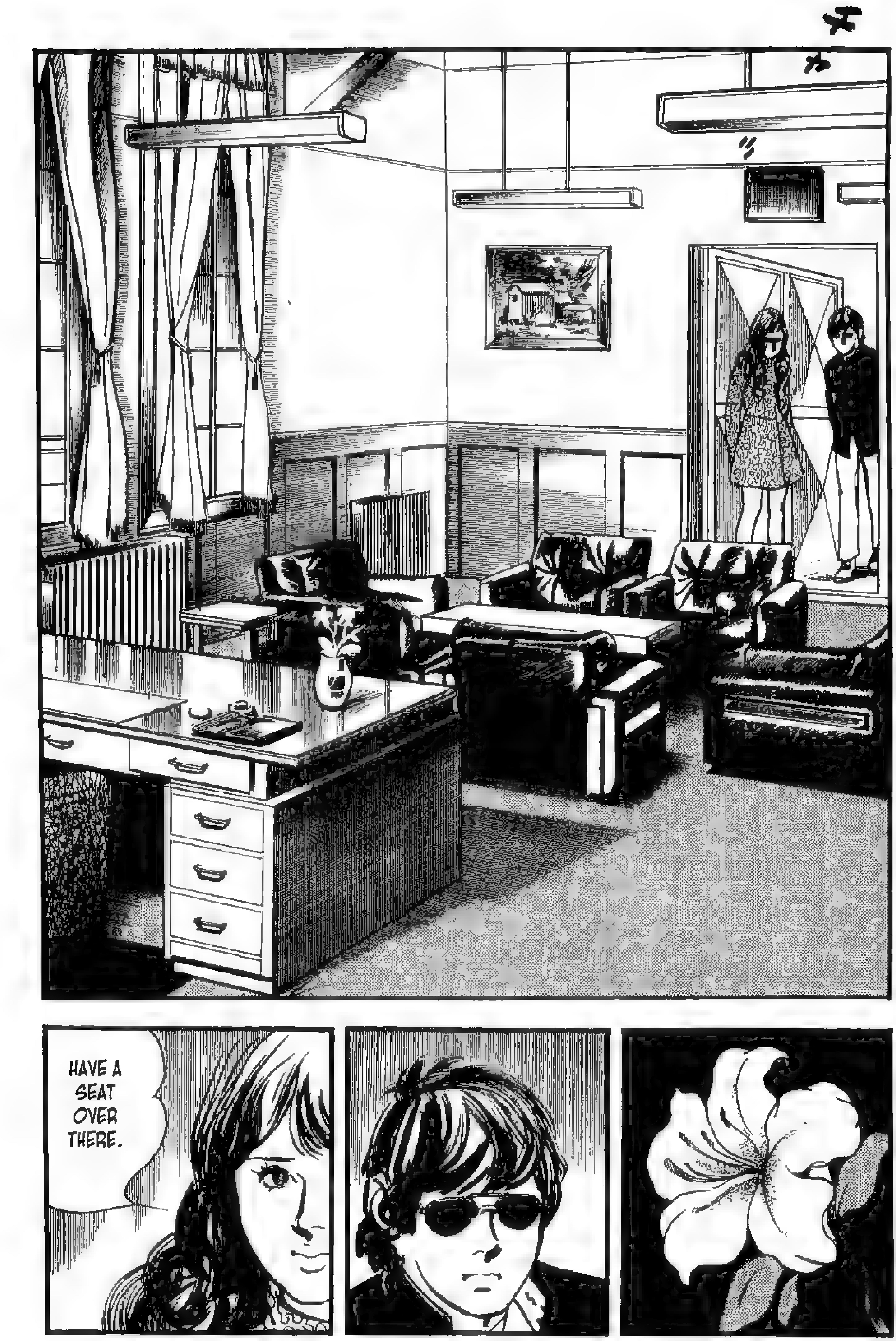
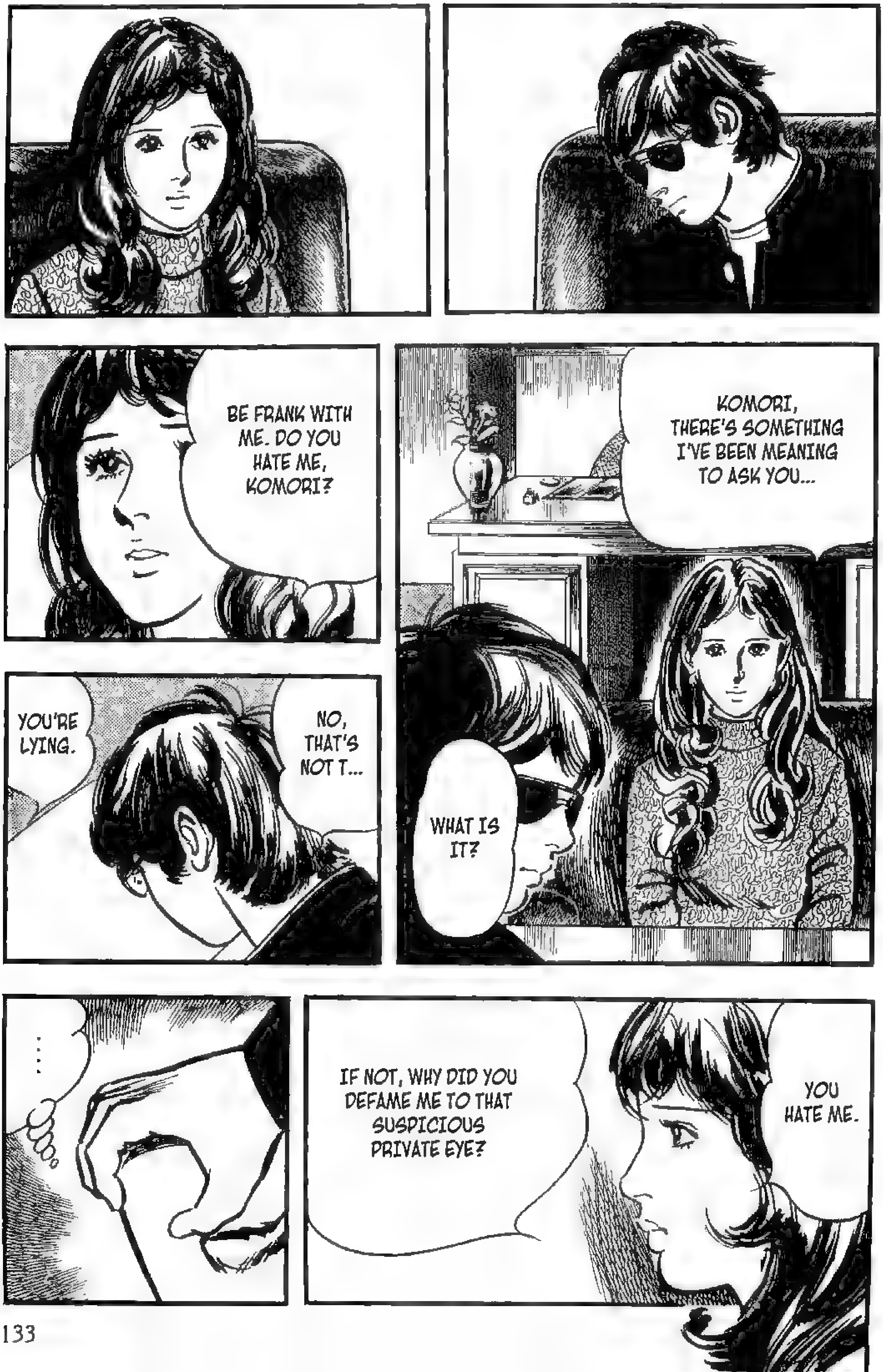
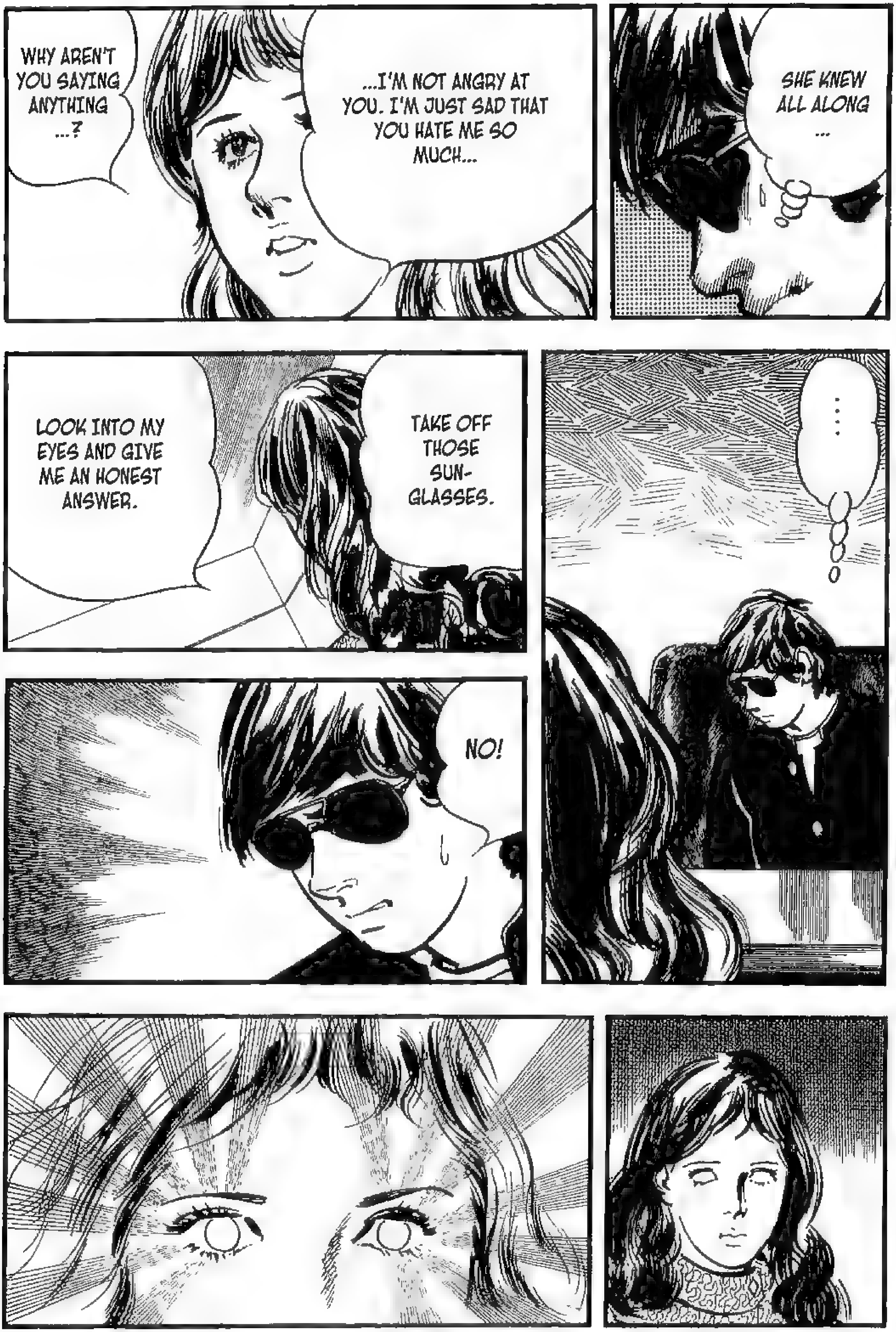
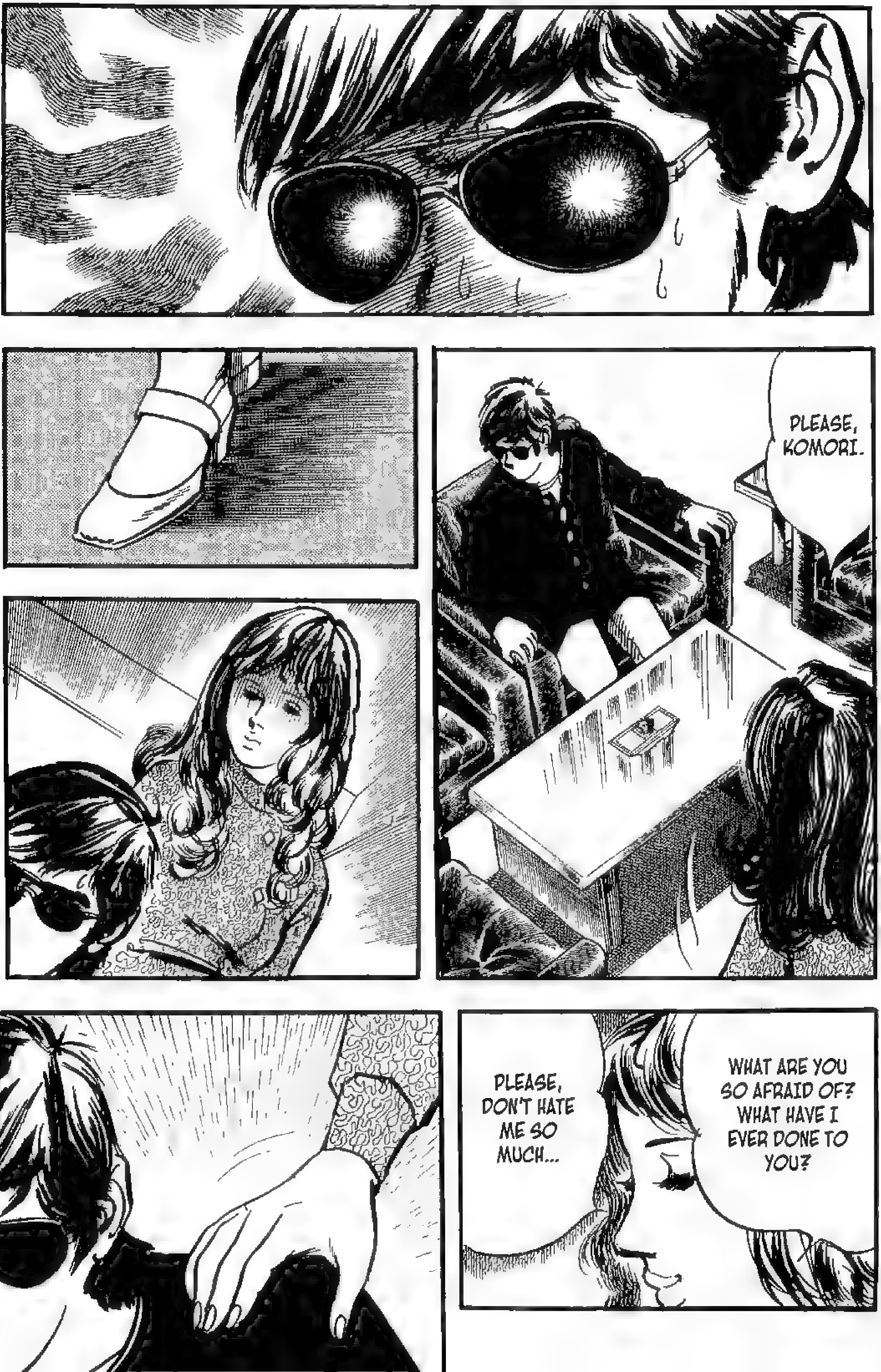
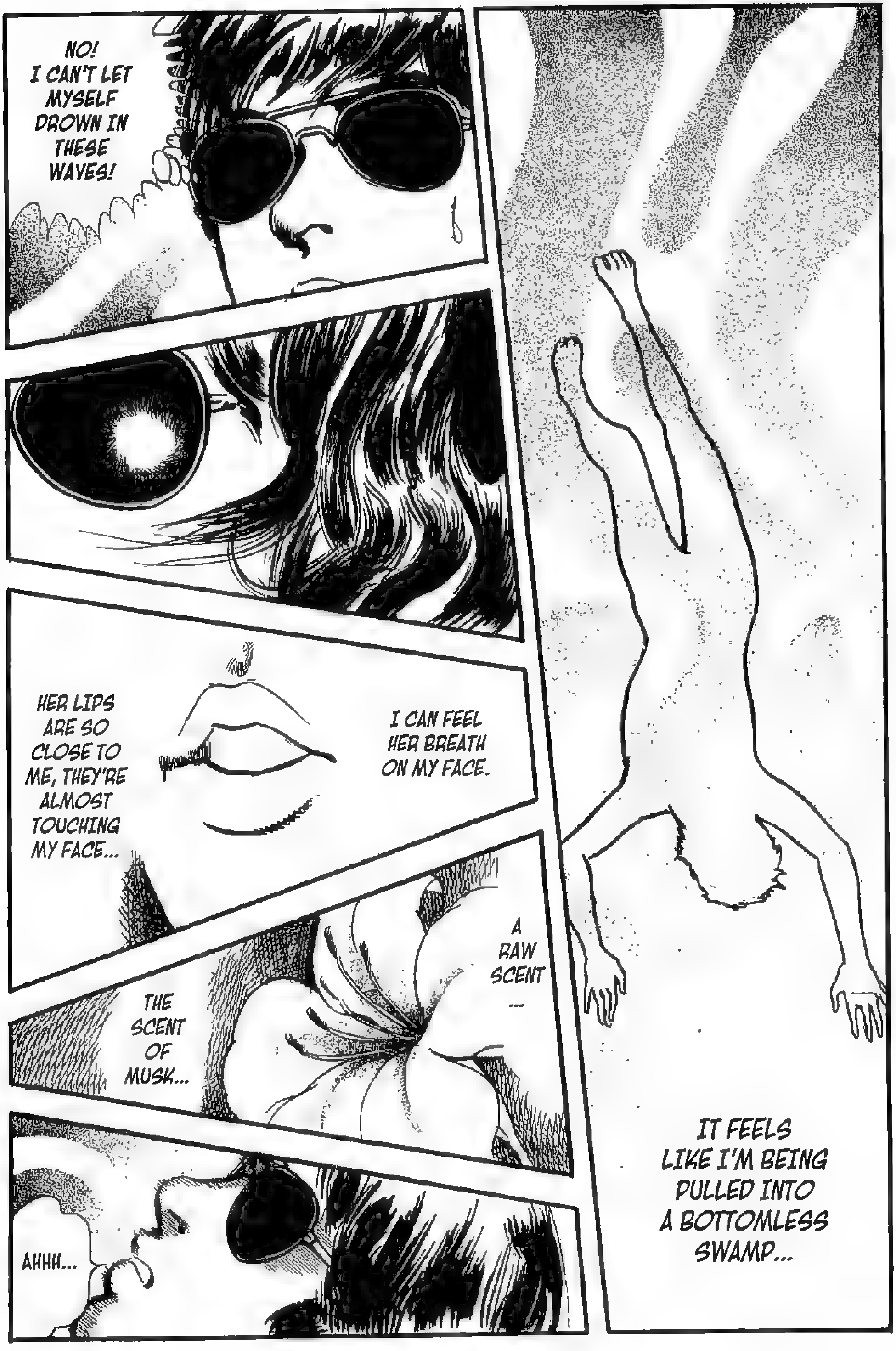
THE AIR WAS PERFECTLY STILL, AND THERE WAS NOT A SOUND...
THOUGH EVERYONE PRETENDED NOT TO LOOK, THEIR ATTENTION WAS FIRMLY DRAWN TO US...
MIWA MANAKO WAS A DICTATOR THAT HELD MASSIVE POWER...
SHE WOULD EXACT MERCILESS RETRIBUTION ON ANYONE WHO DEFIED HER... LIKE THE PRINCIPAL...
COME HERE.

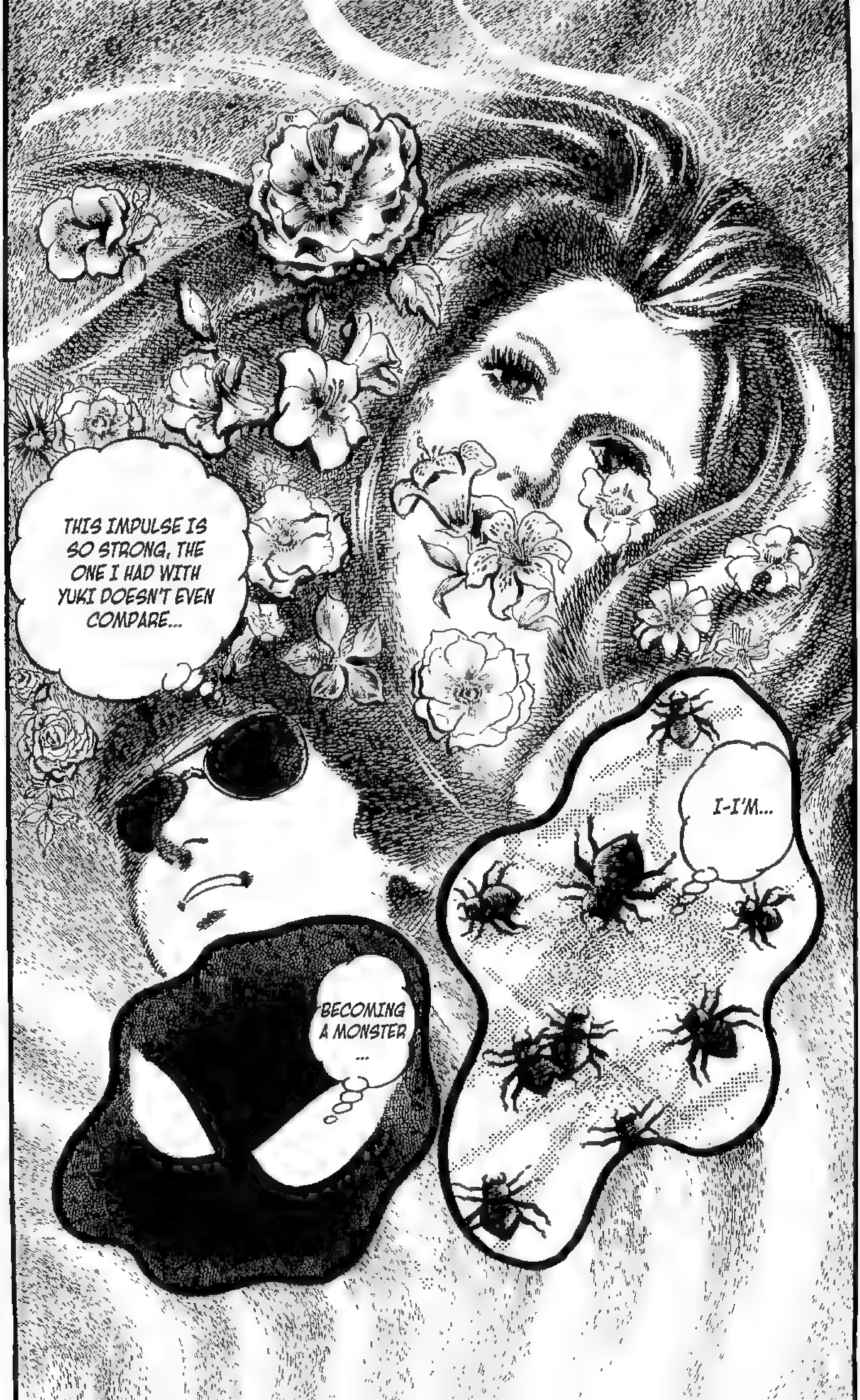

HAVE A SEAT OVER THERE.

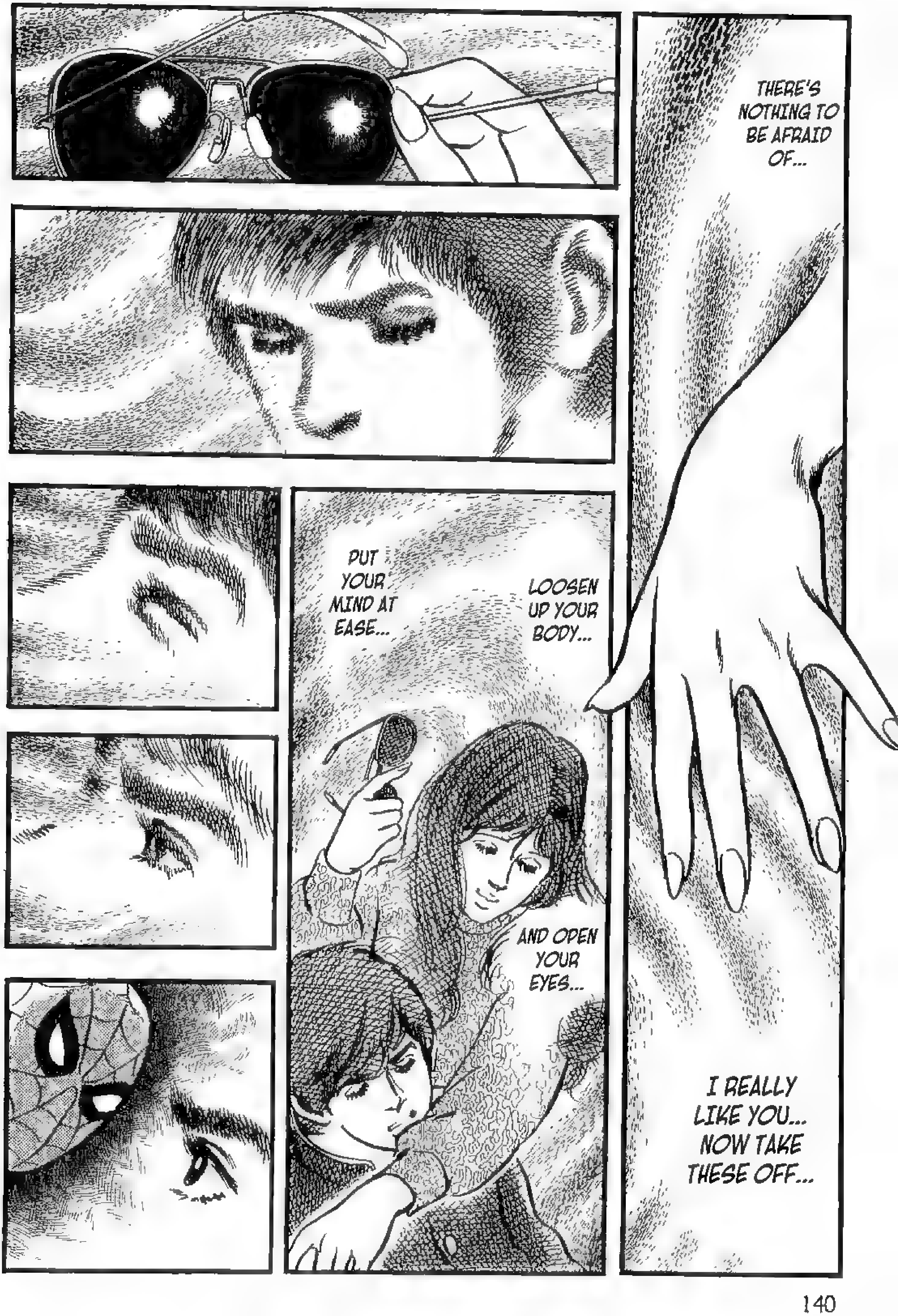

KOMORI, THERE'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU...
WHAT IS IT?
BE FRANK WITH ME. DO YOU HATE ME, KOMORI?
NO, THAT'S NOT T...
YOU'RE LYING.
YOU HATE ME.
IF NOT, WHY DID YOU DEFAME ME TO THAT SUSPICIOUS PRIVATE EYE?
....

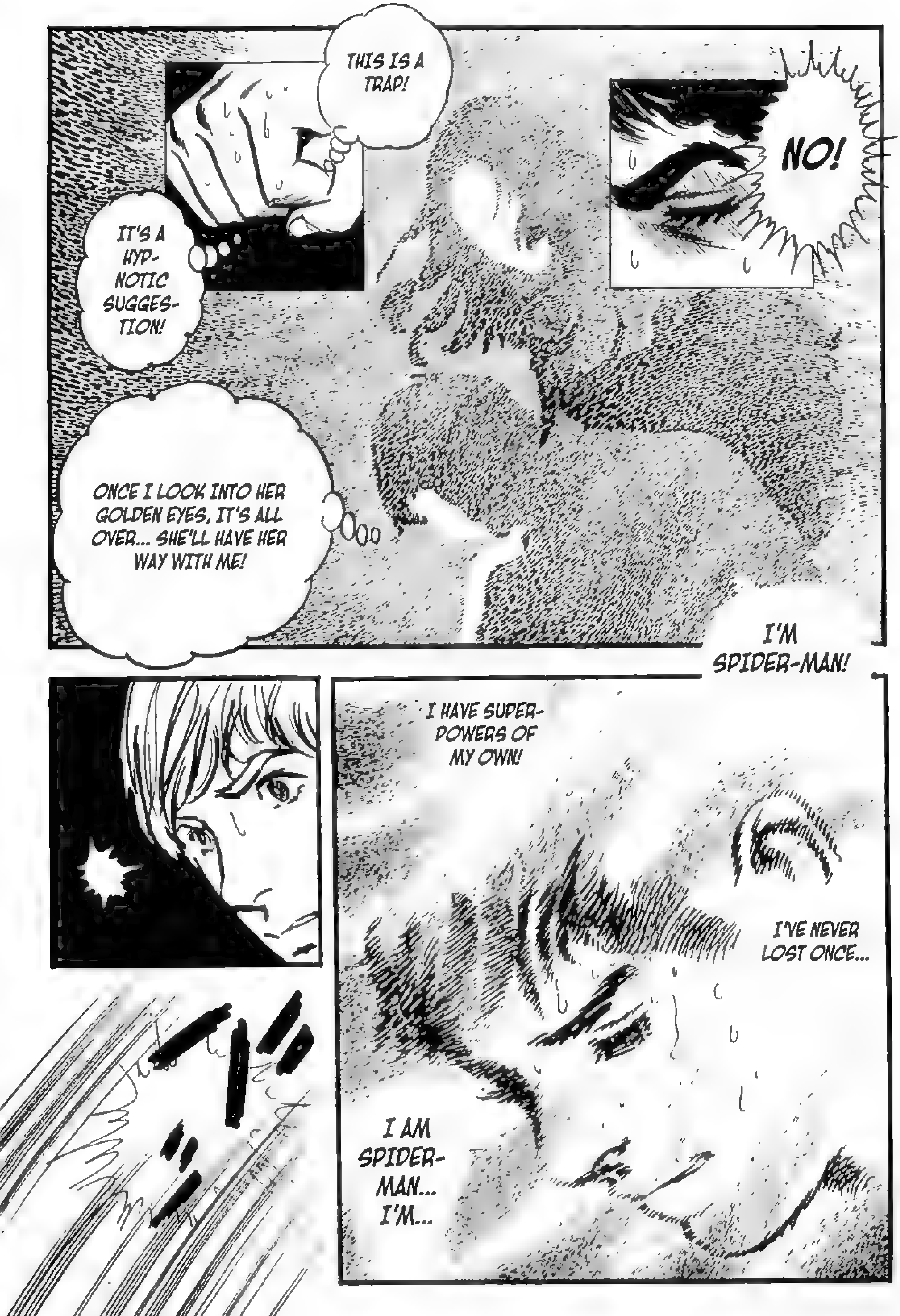

SHE KNEW ALL ALONG ...
...I'M NOT ANGRY AT YOU. I'M JUST SAD THAT YOU HATE ME SO MUCH...
WHY AREN'T YOU SAYING ANYTHING ...?
....
TAKE OFF THOSE SUNGLASSES.
LOOK INTO MY EYES AND GIVE ME AN HONEST ANSWER.
NO!

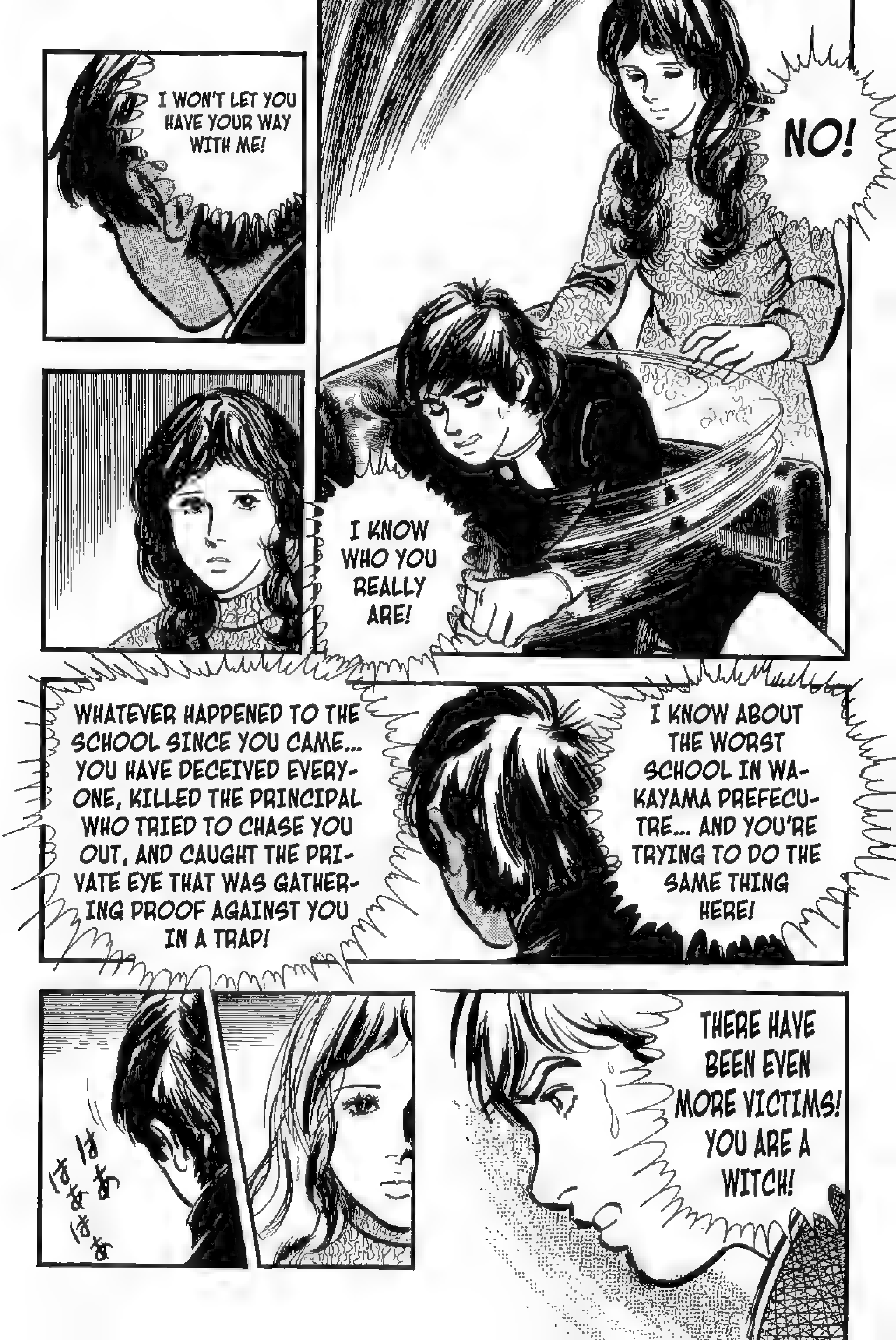

PLEASE, KOMORI.
WHAT ARE YOU SO AFRAID OF? WHAT HAVE I EVER DONE TO YOU?
PLEASE, DON'T HATE ME SO MUCH...


NO! I CAN'T LET MYSELF DROWN IN THESE WAVES!
I CAN FEEL HER BREATH ON MY FACE.
HER LIPS ARE SO CLOSE TO ME, THEY'RE ALMOST TOUCHING MY FACE...
A RAW SCENT ...
THE SCENT OF MUSK...
AHHH...
IT FEELS LIKE I'M BEING PULLED INTO A BOTTOMLESS SWAMP...


THIS IMPULSE IS SO STRONG, THE ONE I HAD WITH YUKI DOESN'T EVEN COMPARE...
I-I'M...
BECOMING A MONSTER ...


THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF...
PUT YOUR MIND AT EASE...
LOOSEN UP YOUR BODY...
AND OPEN YOUR EYES...
I REALLY LIKE YOU... NOW TAKE THESE OFF...


THIS IS A TRAP!
IT'S A HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION!
ONCE I LOOK INTO HER GOLDEN EYES, IT'S ALL OVER... SHE'LL HAVE HER WAY WITH ME!
NO!
I'M SPIDER-MAN!
I HAVE SUPER-POWERS OF MY OWN!
I'VE NEVER LOST ONCE...
I AM SPIDER-MAN... I'M...


I WON'T LET YOU HAVE YOUR WAY WITH ME!
NO!
I KNOW WHO YOU REALLY ARE!
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE SCHOOL SINCE YOU CAME... YOU HAVE DECEIVED EVERYONE, KILLED THE PRINCIPAL WHO TRIED TO CHASE YOU OUT, AND CAUGHT THE PRIVATE EYE THAT WAS GATHERING PROOF AGAINST YOU IN A TRAP!
I KNOW ABOUT THE WORST SCHOOL IN WAKAYAMA PREFECUTRE... AND YOU'RE TRYING TO DO THE SAME THING HERE!
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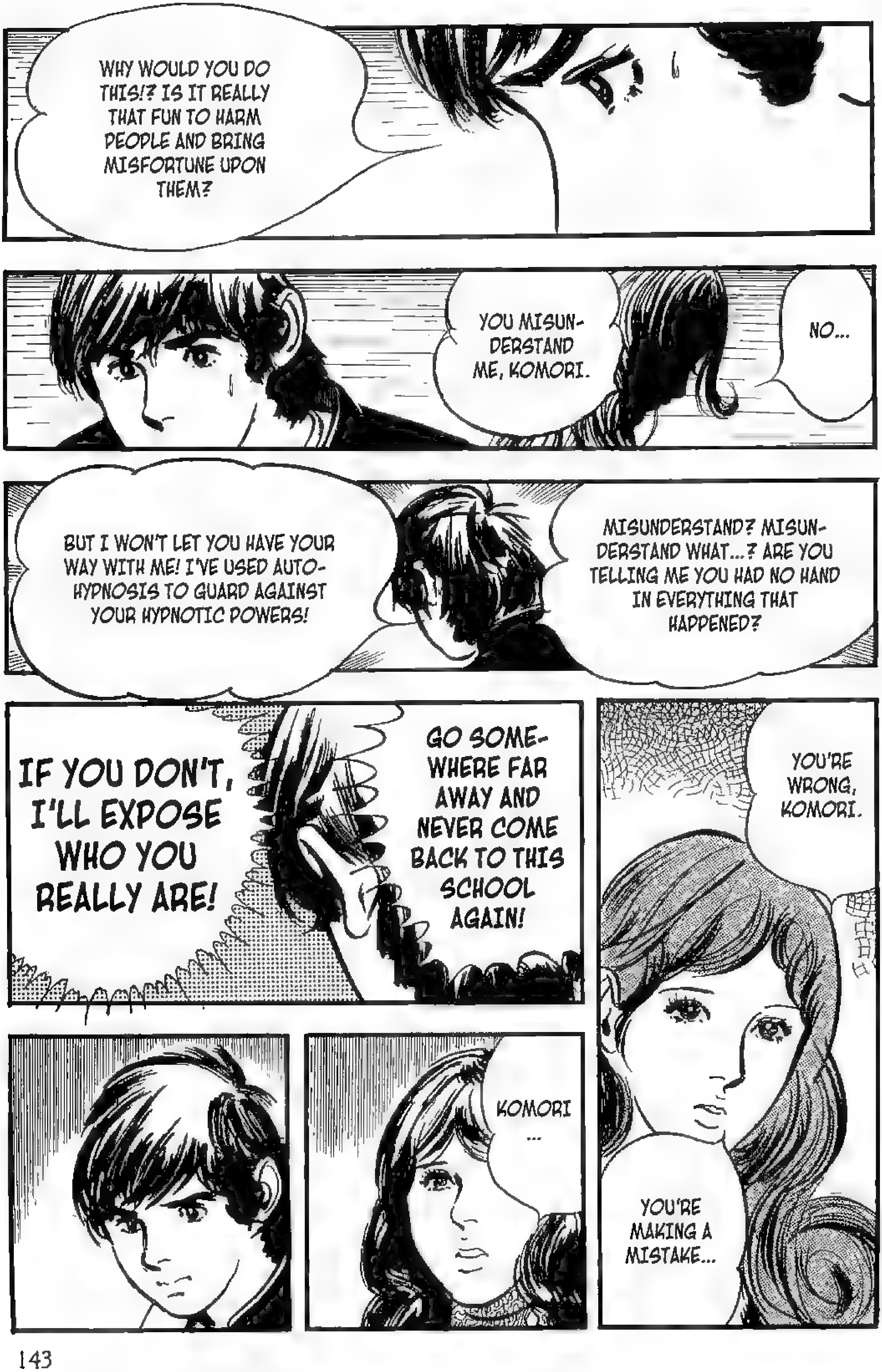
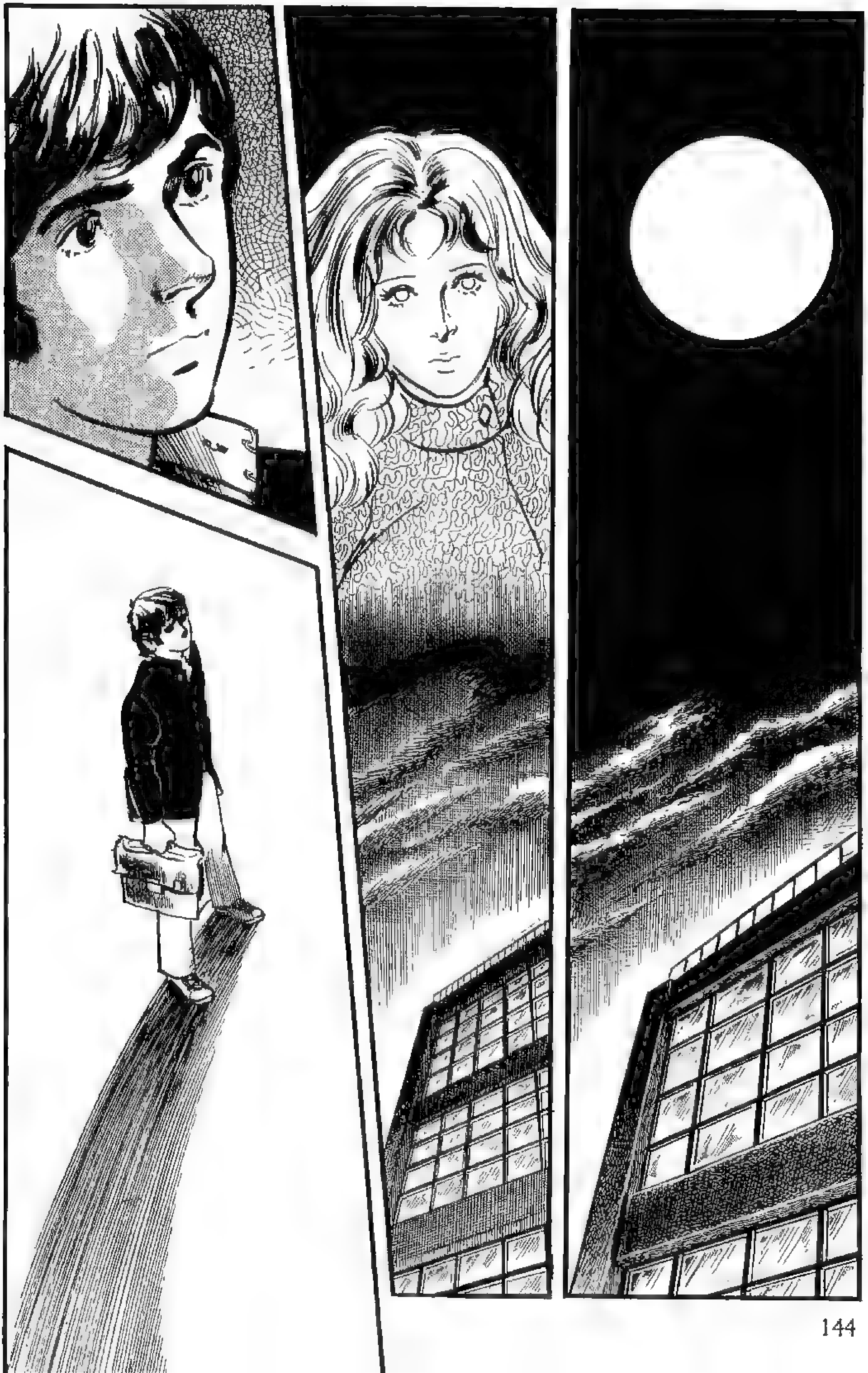
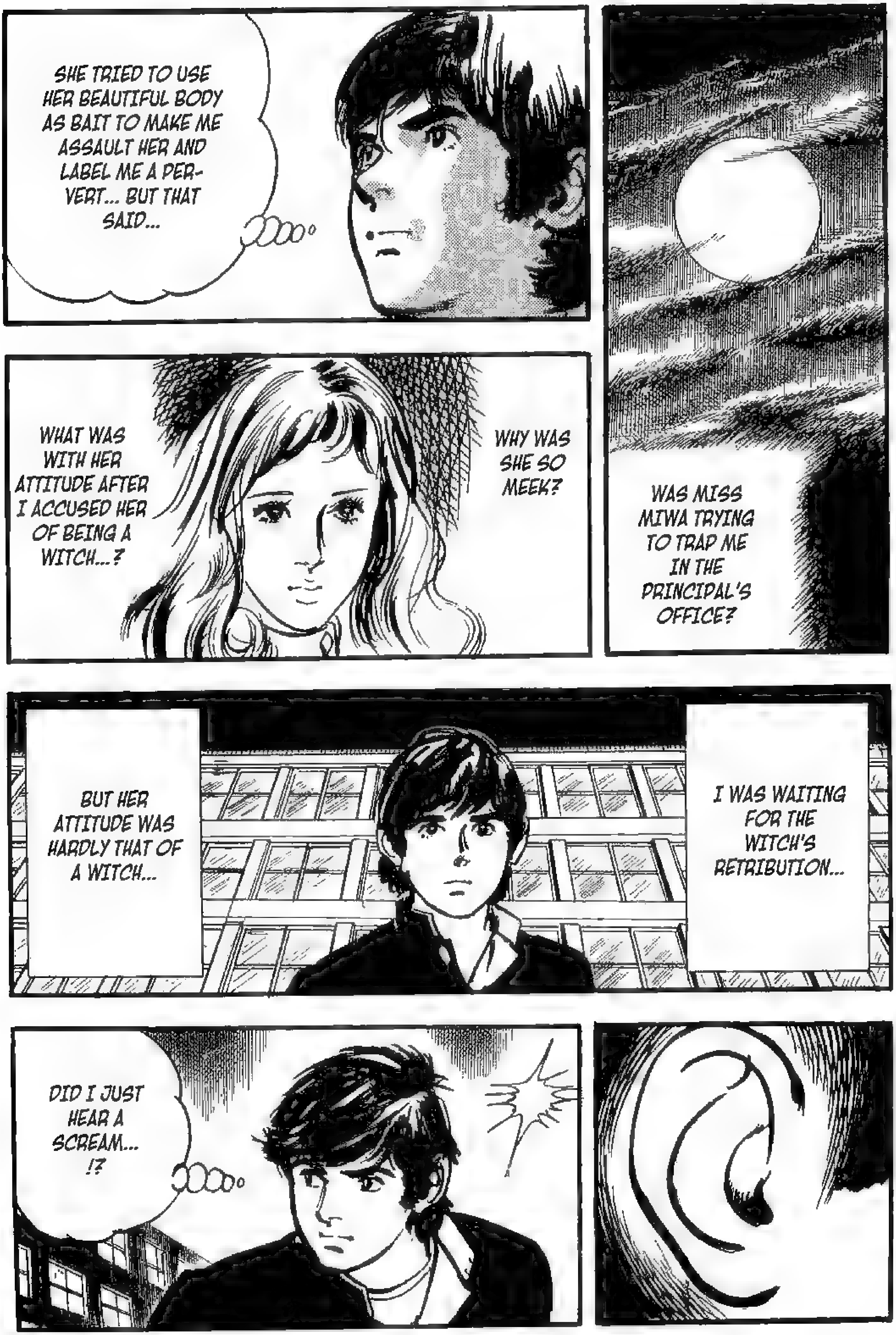
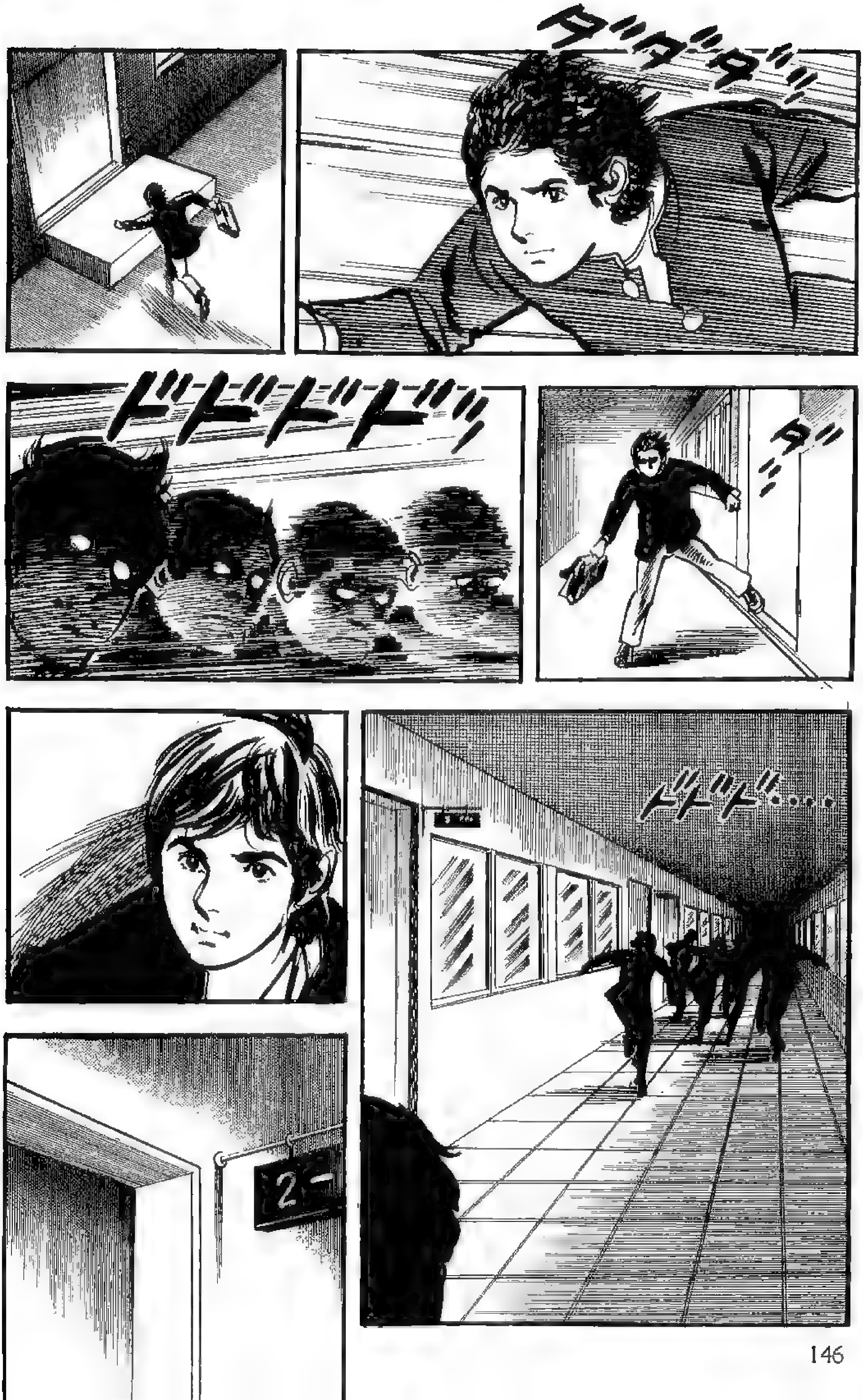
THERE HAVE BEEN EVEN MORE VICTIMS! YOU ARE A WITCH!


WHY WOULD YOU DO THIS!? IS IT REALLY THAT FUN TO HARM PEOPLE AND BRING MISFORTUNE UPON THEM?
NO...
YOU MISUNDERSTAND ME, KOMORI.
MISUNDERSTAND? MISUNDERSTAND WHAT...? ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU HAD NO HAND IN EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED?
BUT I WON'T LET YOU HAVE YOUR WAY WITH ME! I'VE USED AUTO-HYPNOSIS TO GUARD AGAINST YOUR HYPNOTIC POWERS!
GO SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY AND NEVER COME BACK TO THIS SCHOOL AGAIN!
IF YOU DON'T, I'LL EXPOSE WHO YOU REALLY ARE!
KOMORI ...
YOU'RE WRONG, KOMORI.
YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE...




WAS MISS MIWA TRYING TO TRAP ME IN THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE?
SHE TRIED TO USE HER BEAUTIFUL BODY AS BAIT TO MAKE ME ASSAULT HER AND LABEL ME A PERVERT... BUT THAT SAID...
WHAT WAS WITH HER ATTITUDE AFTER I ACCUSED HER OF BEING A WITCH...?
WHY WAS SHE SO MEEK?
BUT HER ATTITUDE WAS HARDLY THAT OF A WITCH...
I WAS WAITING FOR THE WITCH'S RETRIBUTION...
DID I JUST HEAR A SCREAM...!?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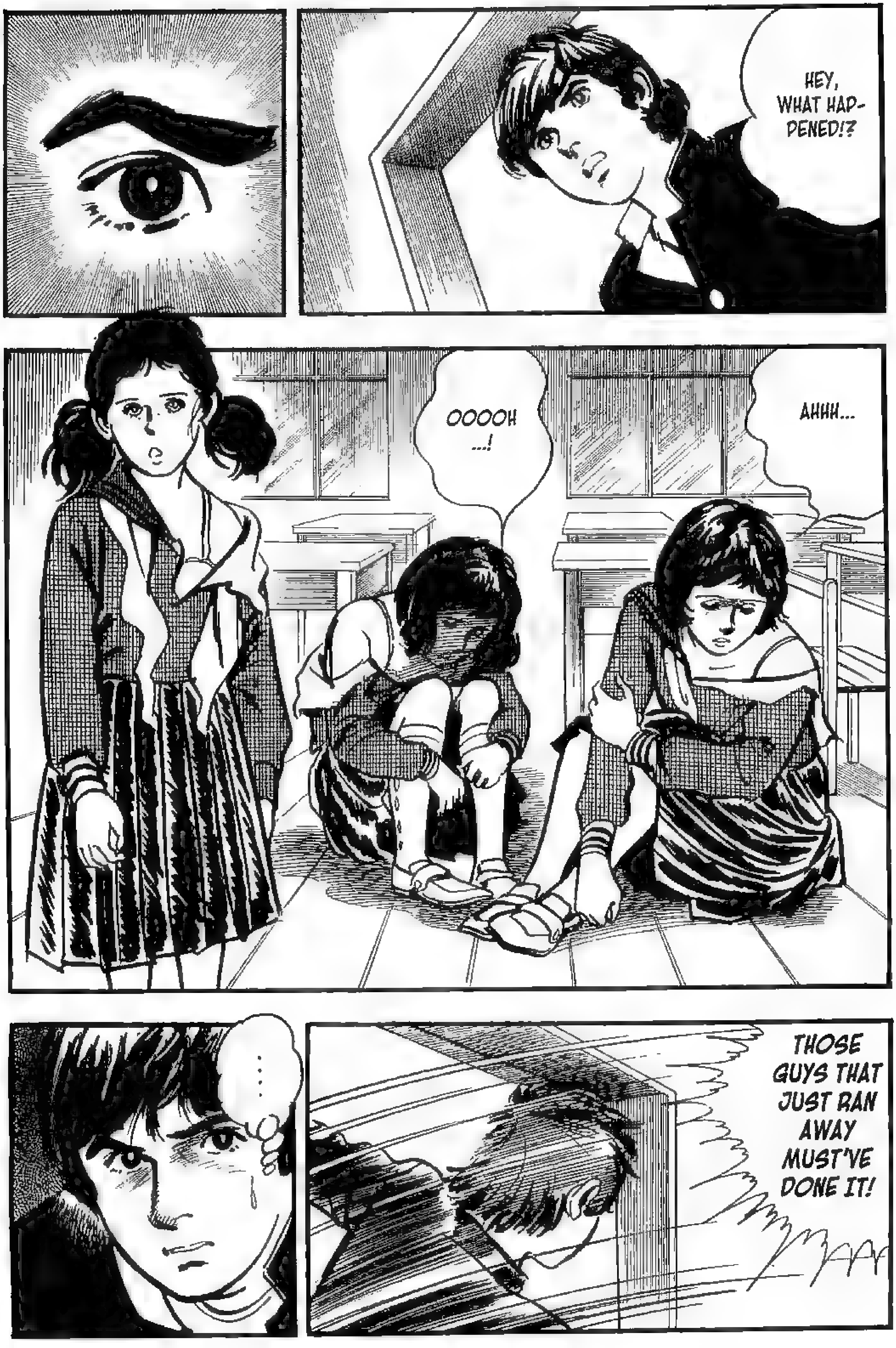
HEY, WHAT HAPPENED!?
AHHH...
OOOOH ...!
THOSE GUYS THAT JUST RAN AWAY MUST'VE DONE IT!
....

NO, WAIT... THEY WERE NO MORE THAN VICTIMS OF THE WITCH, LIKE AKAHARA!
...THE WORST SCHOOL IS REPEATING ITSELF RIGHT HERE AND NOW!
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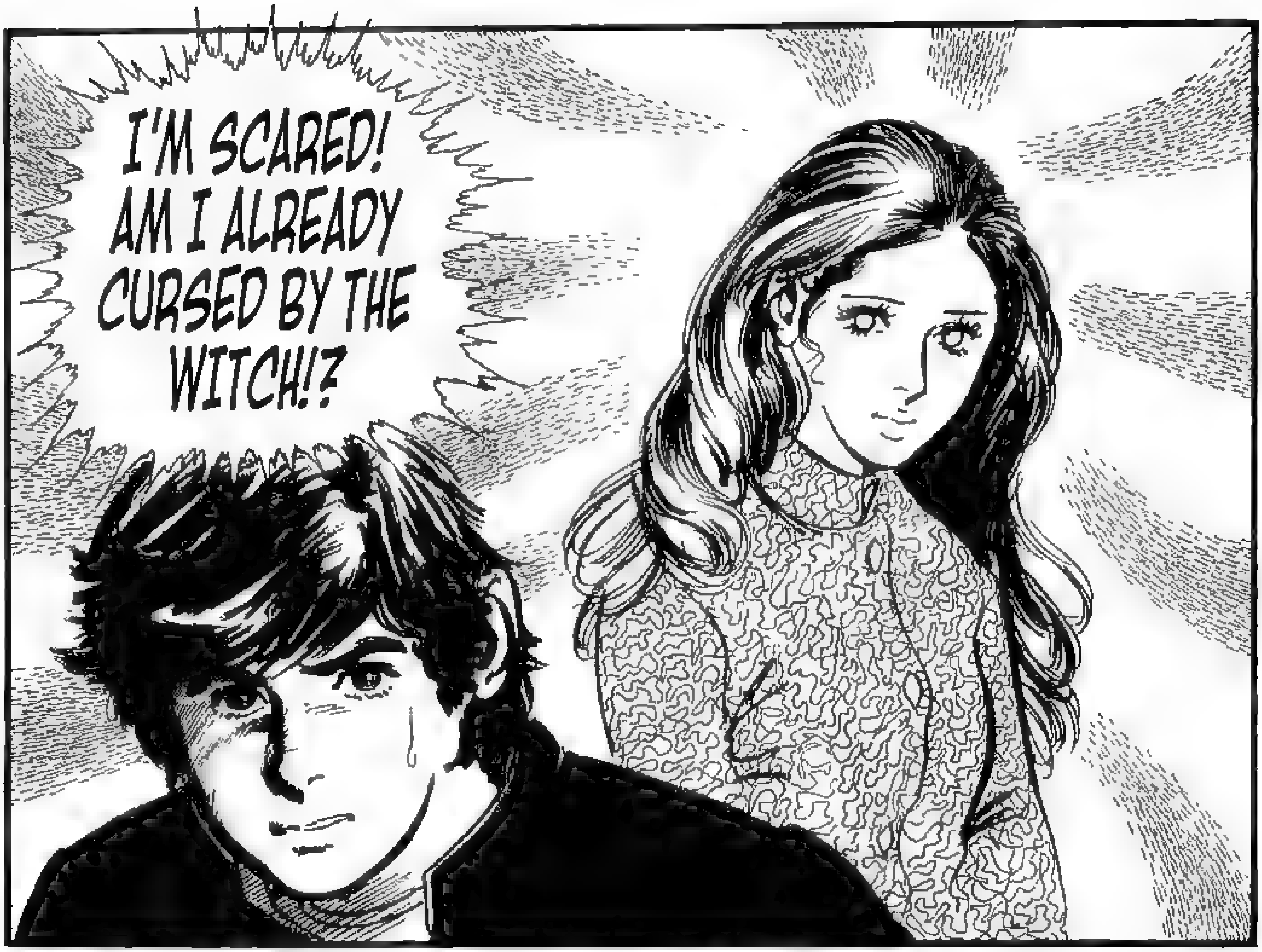
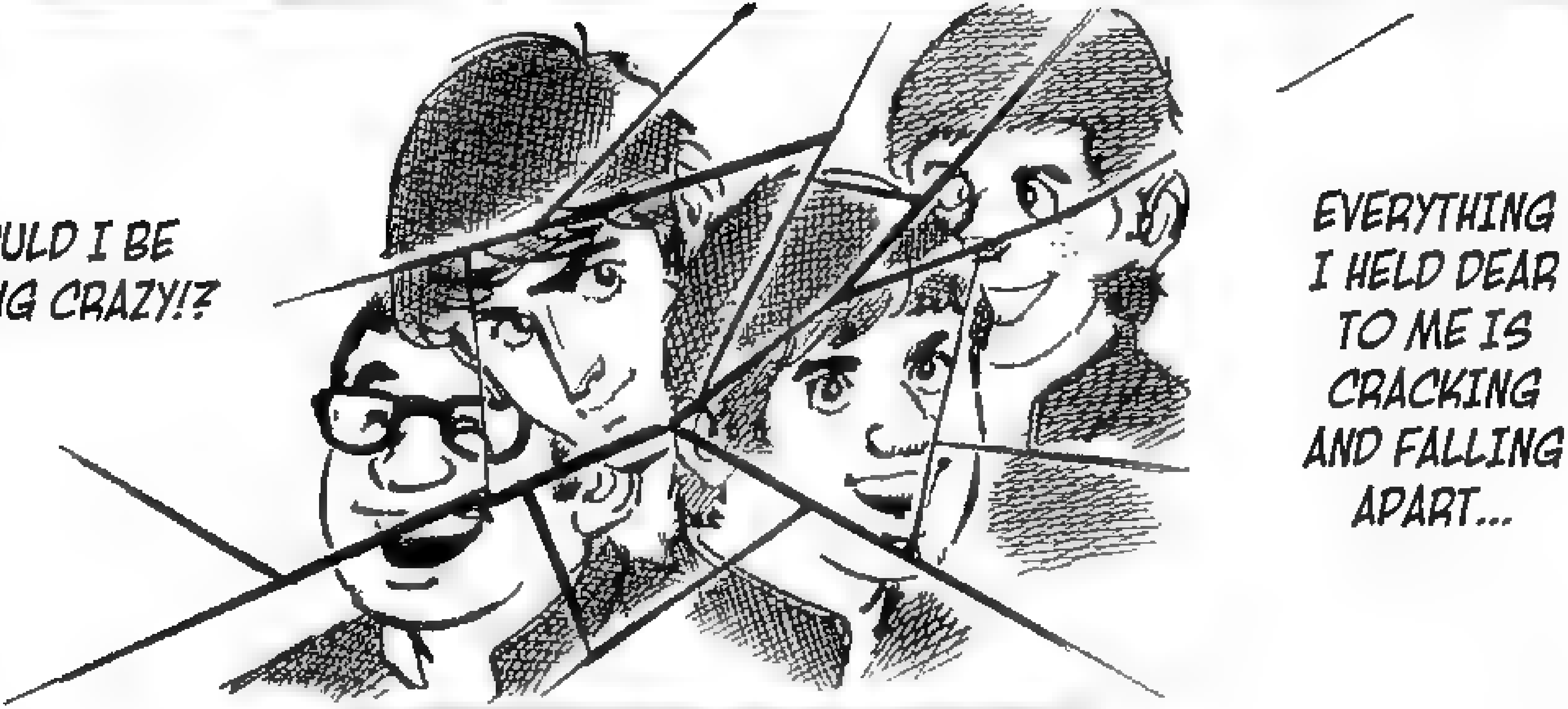
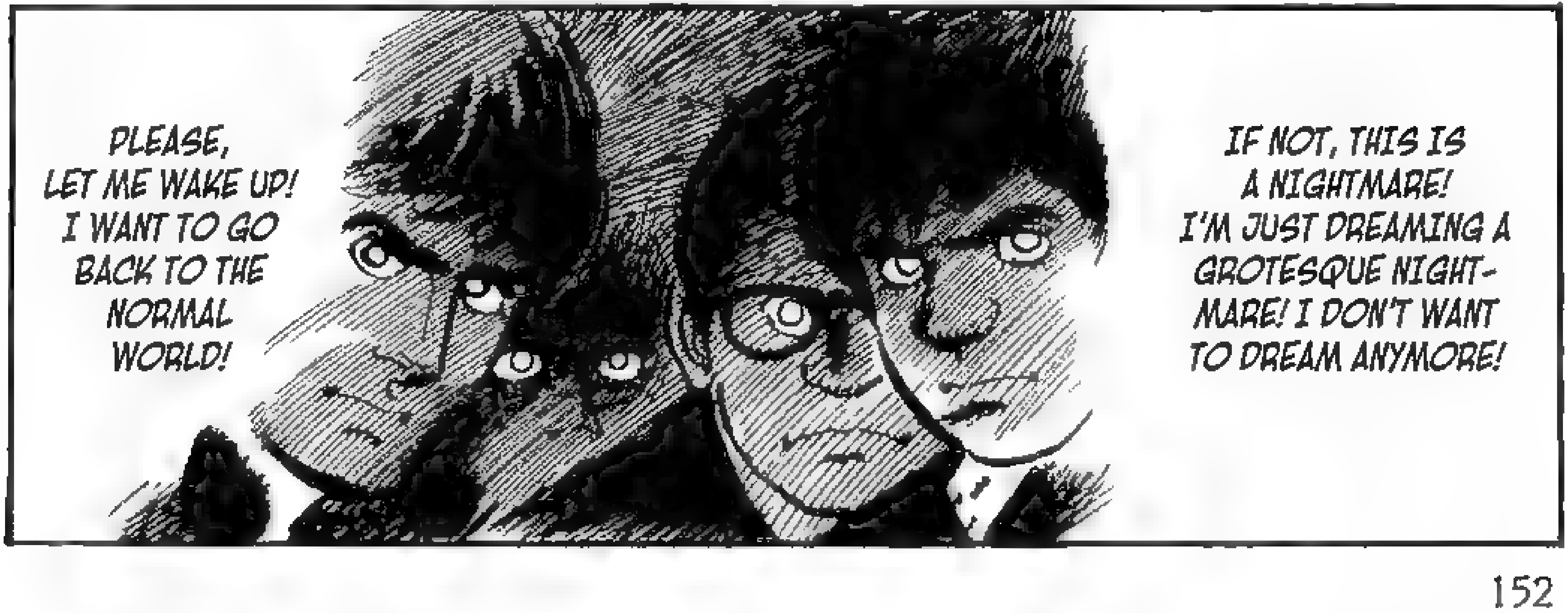
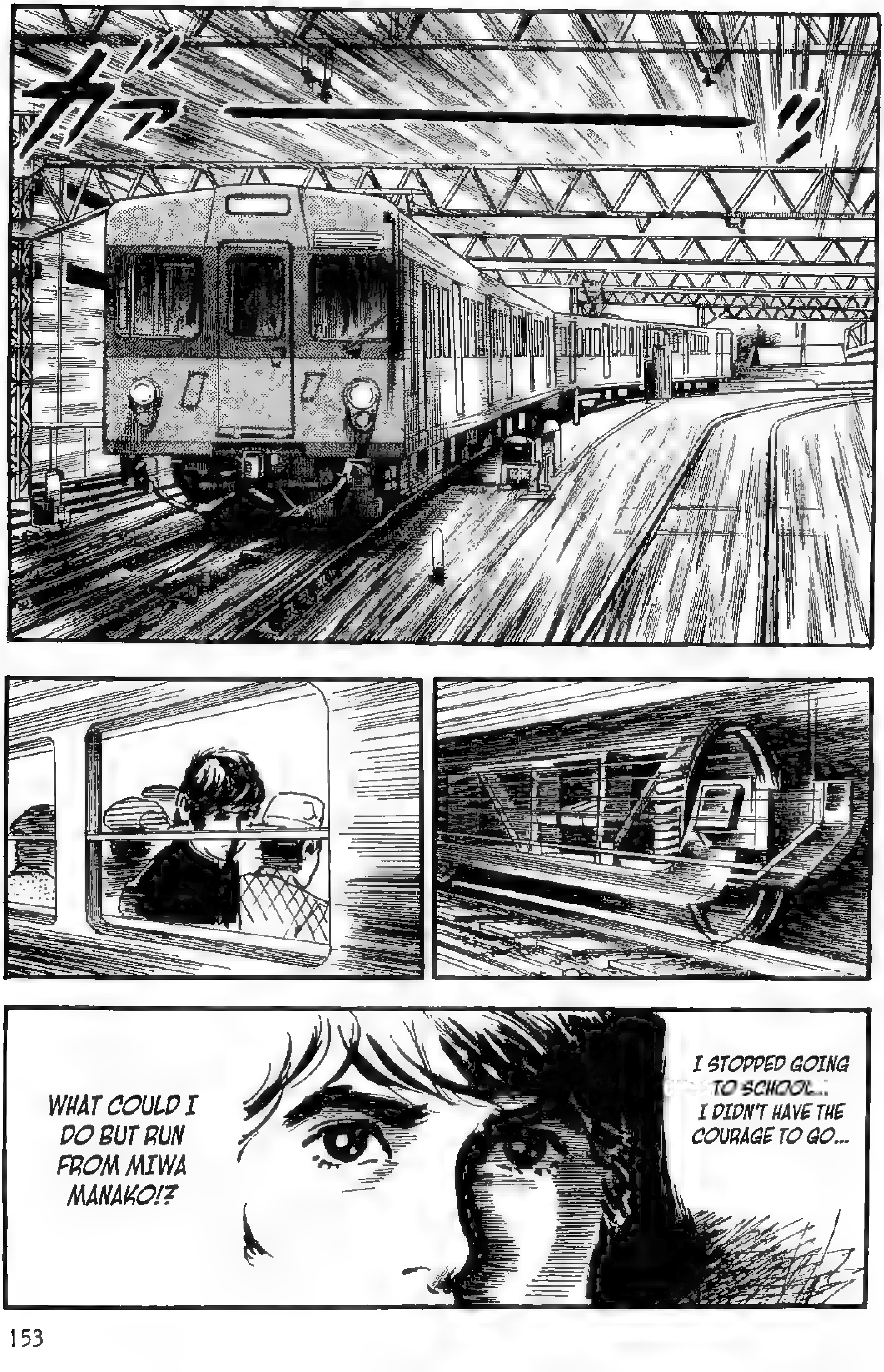
THIS IS STILL JUST THE BEGINNING...
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO!?
KILL THE WITCH!
BURN HER!!

IT WAS JUST LIKE A NIGHTMARE...
LIKE A WARPED MIRROR WORLD, EVERYTHING SEEMED TO CHANGE SHAPE, AND EVERYONE SHOWED THEIR GROTESQUE, CRUEL FACES.
THEY WERE WATCHING ME WITH MALICE IN THEIR EYES.
YES, ALL MY DEAR FRIENDS HAVE BECOME FILLED WITH ANIMOSITY, AND ARE TURNING INTO STRANGERS!


I'M SCARED! AM I ALREADY CURSED BY THE WITCH!?


EVERYTHING I HELD DEAR TO ME IS CRACKING AND FALLING APART...
COULD I BE GOING CRAZY!?


IF NOT, THIS IS A NIGHTMARE! I'M JUST DREAMING A GROTESQUE NIGHTMARE! I DON'T WANT TO DREAM ANYMORE!
PLEASE, LET ME WAKE UP! I WANT TO GO BACK TO THE NORMAL WORLD!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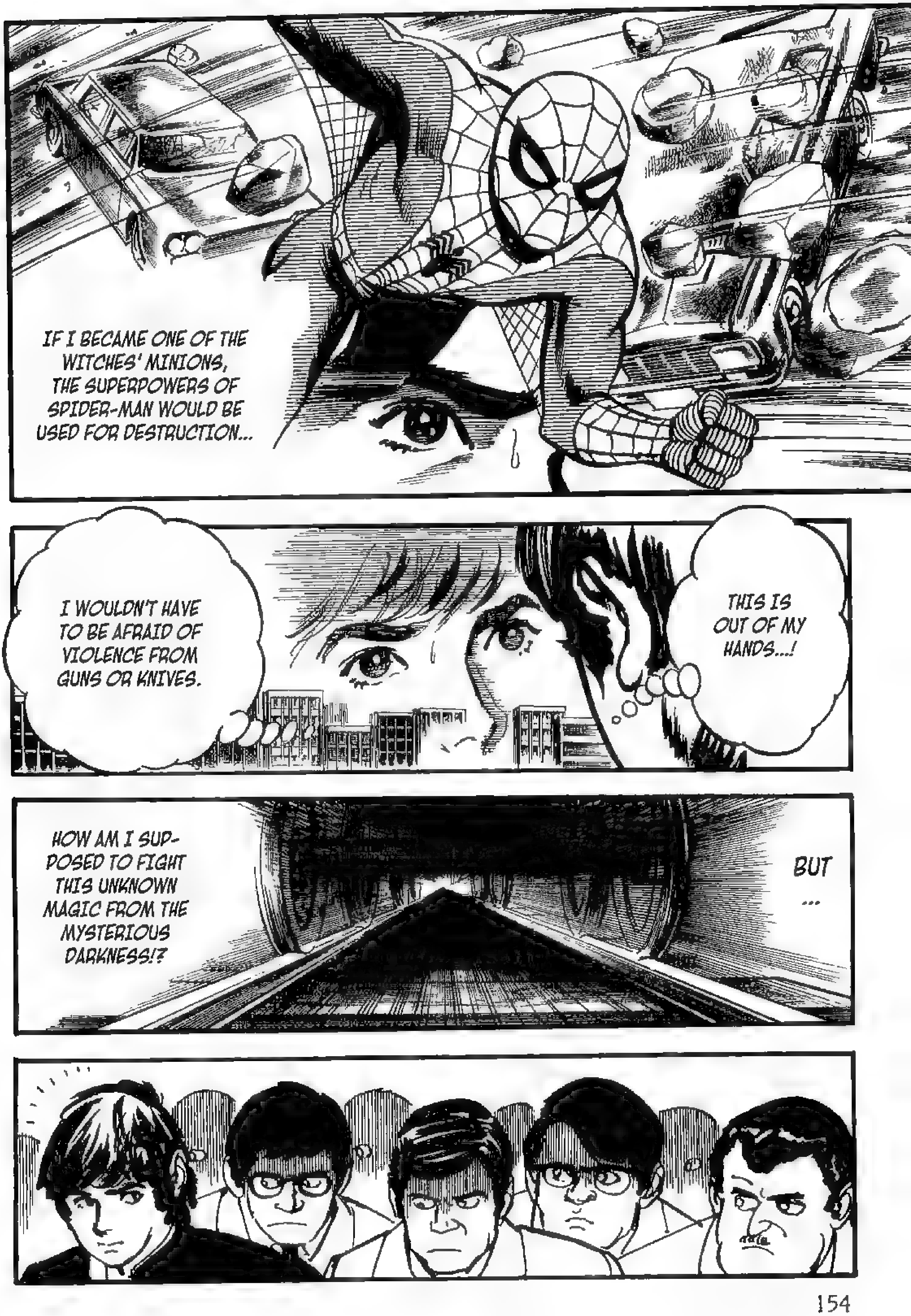
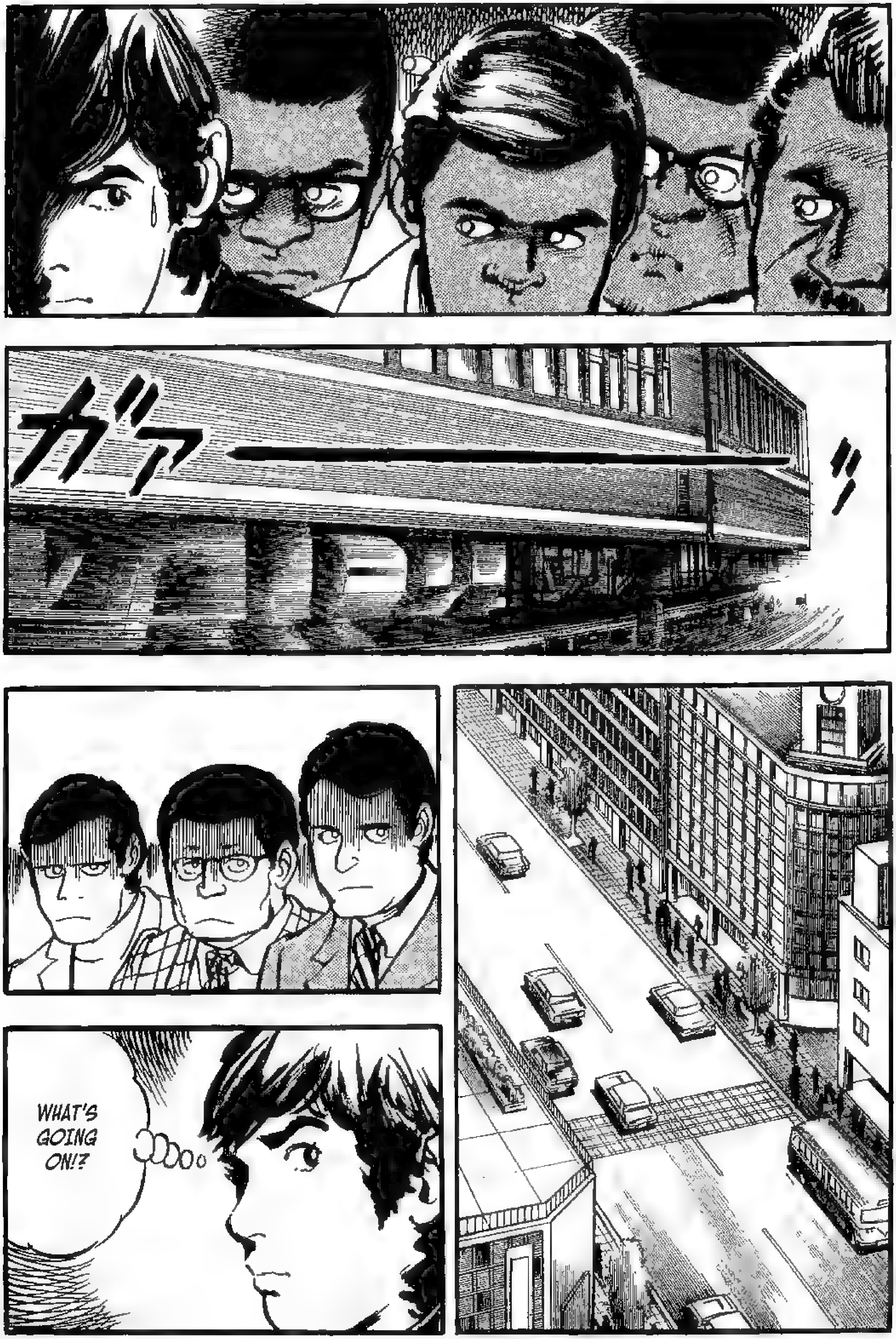
I STOPPED GOING TO SCHOOL... I DIDN'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO GO...
WHAT COULD I DO BUT RUN FROM MIWA MANAKO!?


IF I BECAME ONE OF THE WITCHES' MINIONS, THE SUPERPOWERS OF SPIDER-MAN WOULD BE USED FOR DESTRUCTION...
THIS IS OUT OF MY HANDS...!
I WOULDN'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID OF VIOLENCE FROM GUNS OR KNIVES.
BUT ...
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FIGHT THIS UNKNOWN MAGIC FROM THE MYSTERIOUS DARKNESS!?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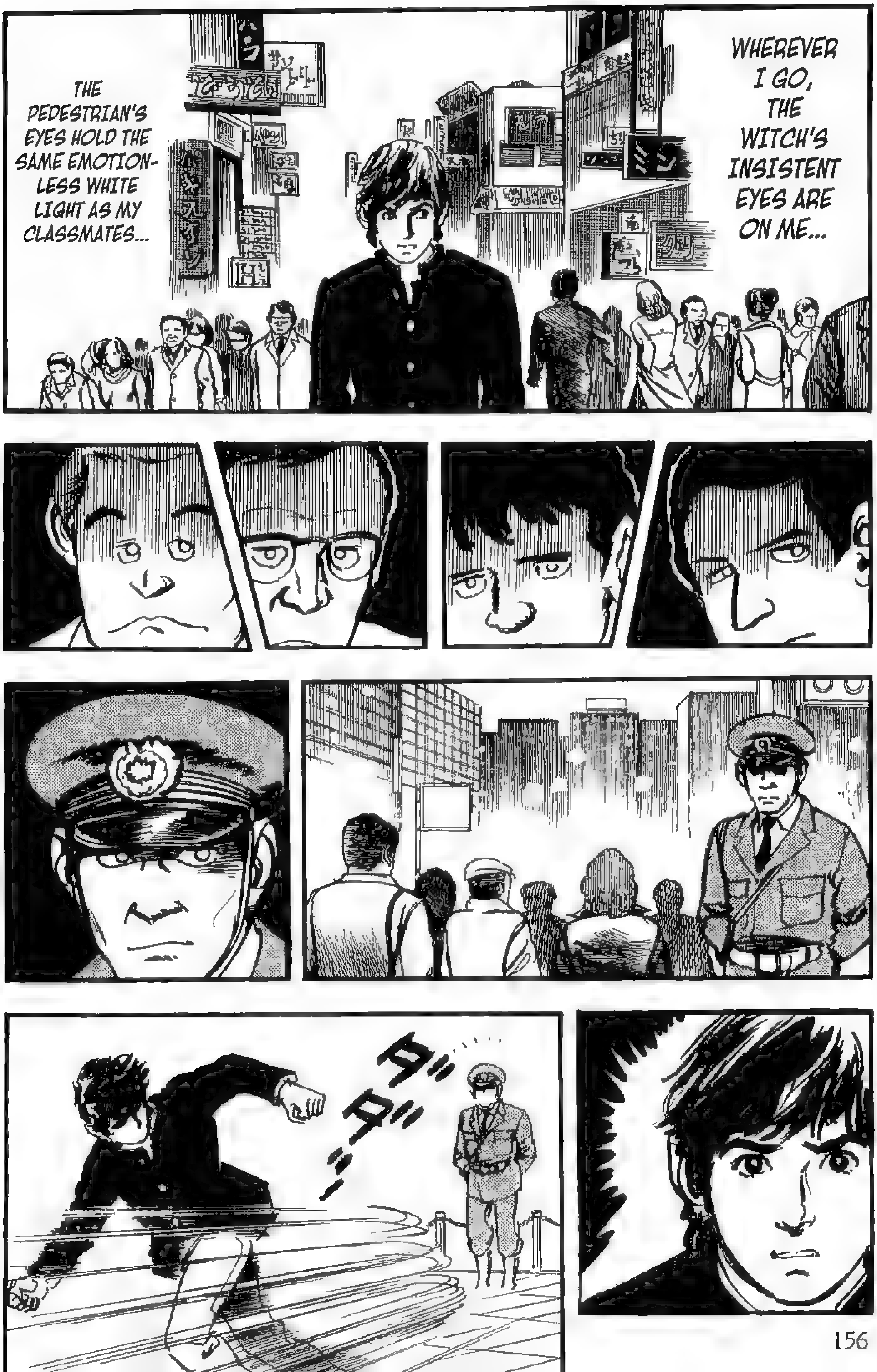
WHAT'S GOING ON!?


WHEREVER I GO, THE WITCH'S INSISTENT EYES ARE ON ME...
THE PEDESTRIAN'S EYES HOLD THE SAME EMOTIONLESS WHITE LIGHT AS MY CLASSMATES...
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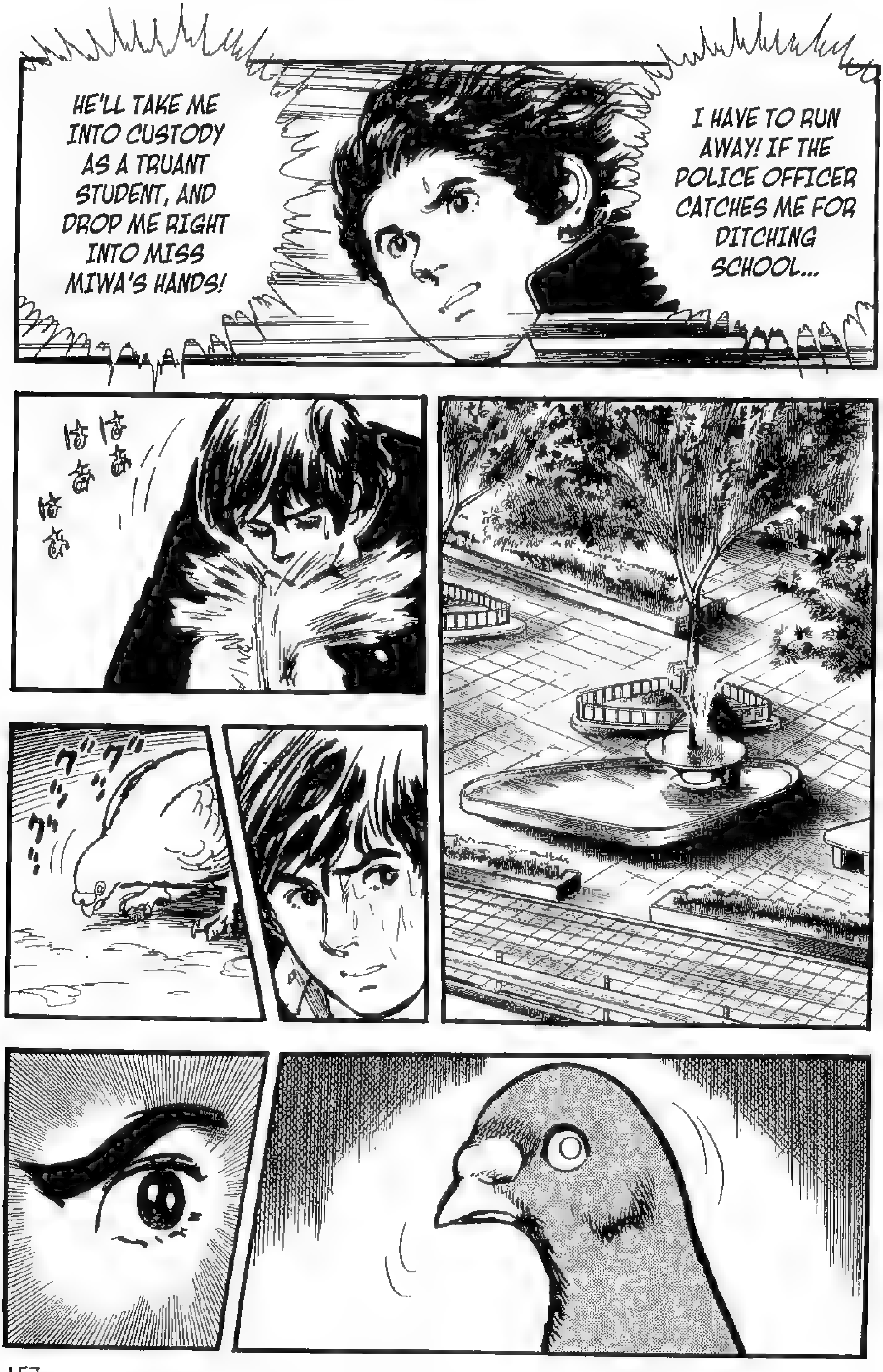
I HAVE TO RUN AWAY! IF THE POLICE OFFICER CATCHES ME FOR DITCHING SCHOOL...
HE'LL TAKE ME INTO CUSTODY AS A TRUANT STUDENT, AND DROP ME RIGHT INTO MISS MIWA'S HANDS!
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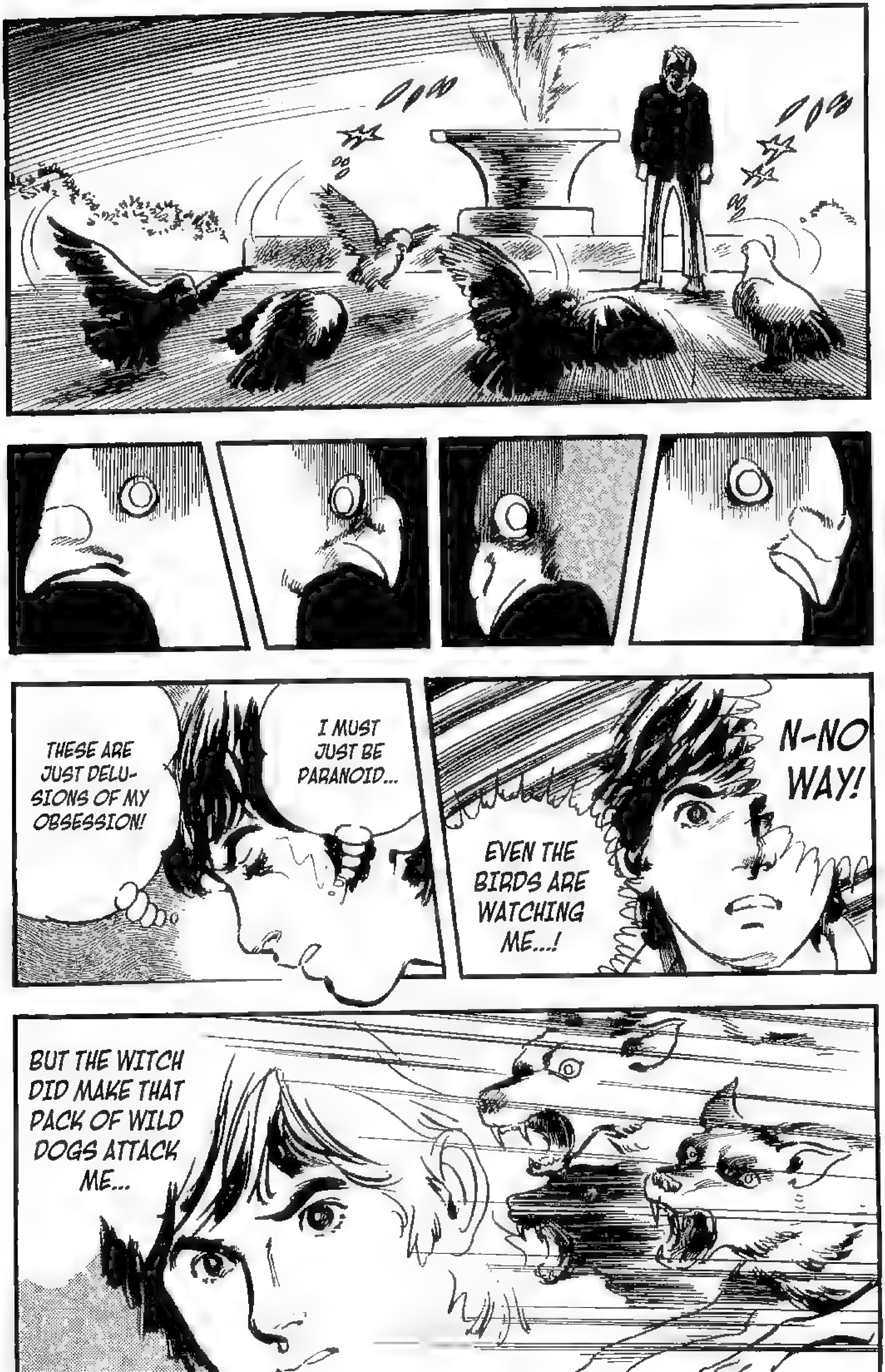
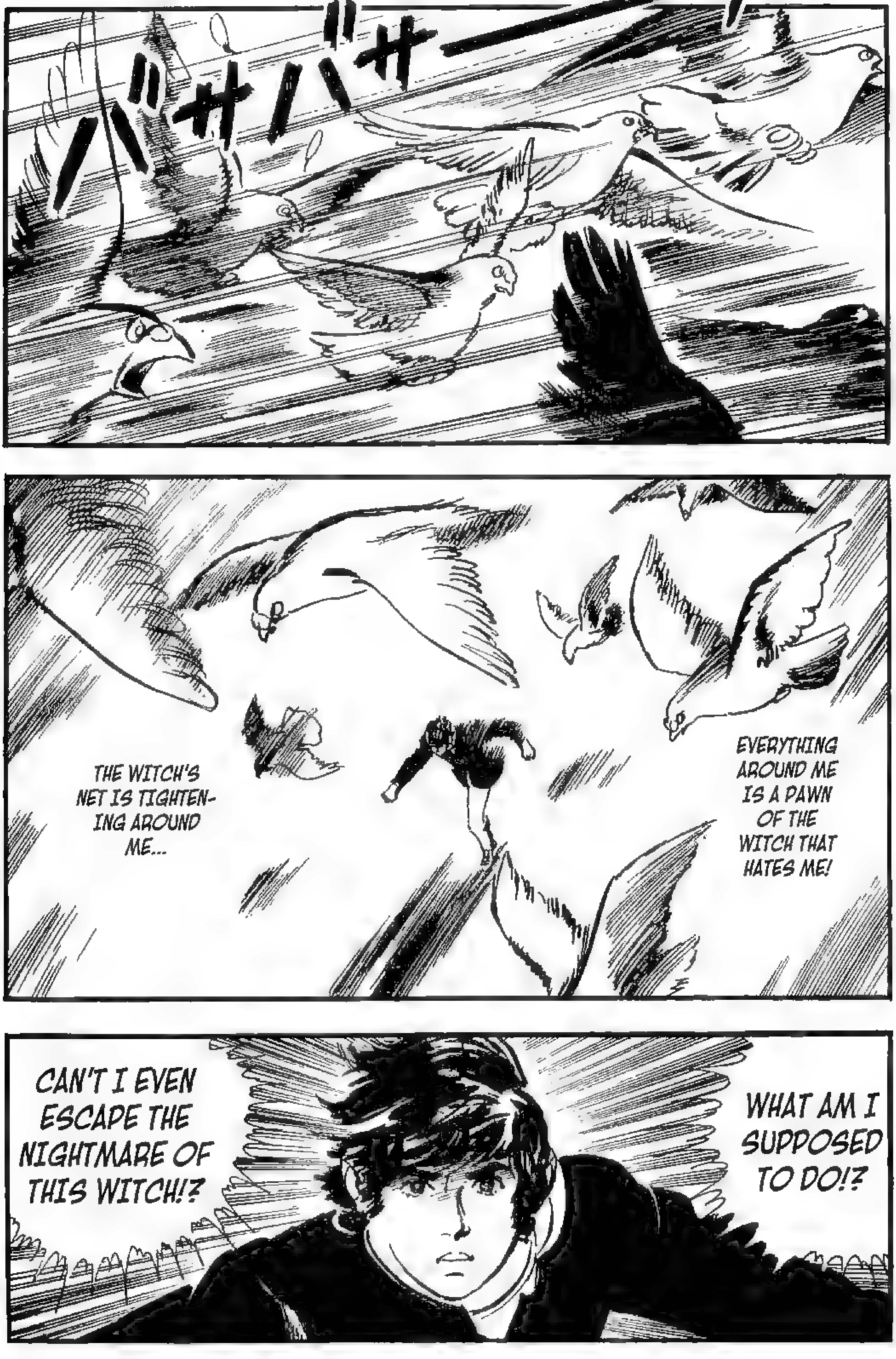

N-NO WAY!
EVEN THE BIRDS ARE WATCHING ME...!
I MUST JUST BE PARANOID...
THESE ARE JUST DELUSIONS OF MY OBSESSION!
BUT THE WITCH DID MAKE THAT PACK OF WILD DOGS ATTACK ME...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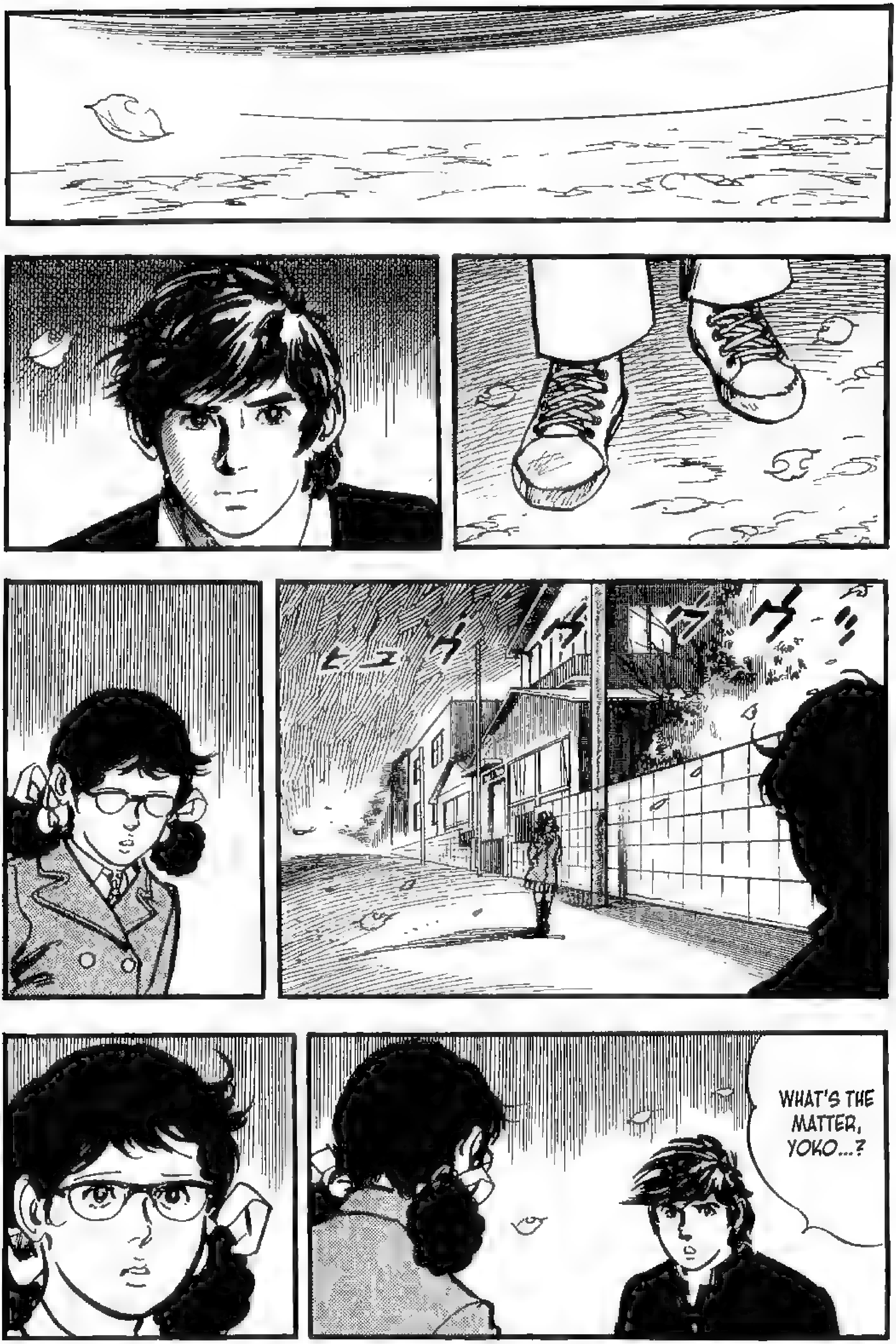
EVERYTHING AROUND ME IS A PAWN OF THE WITCH THAT HATES ME!
THE WITCH'S NET IS TIGHTENING AROUND ME...
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO!?
CAN'T I EVEN ESCAPE THE NIGHTMARE OF THIS WITCH!?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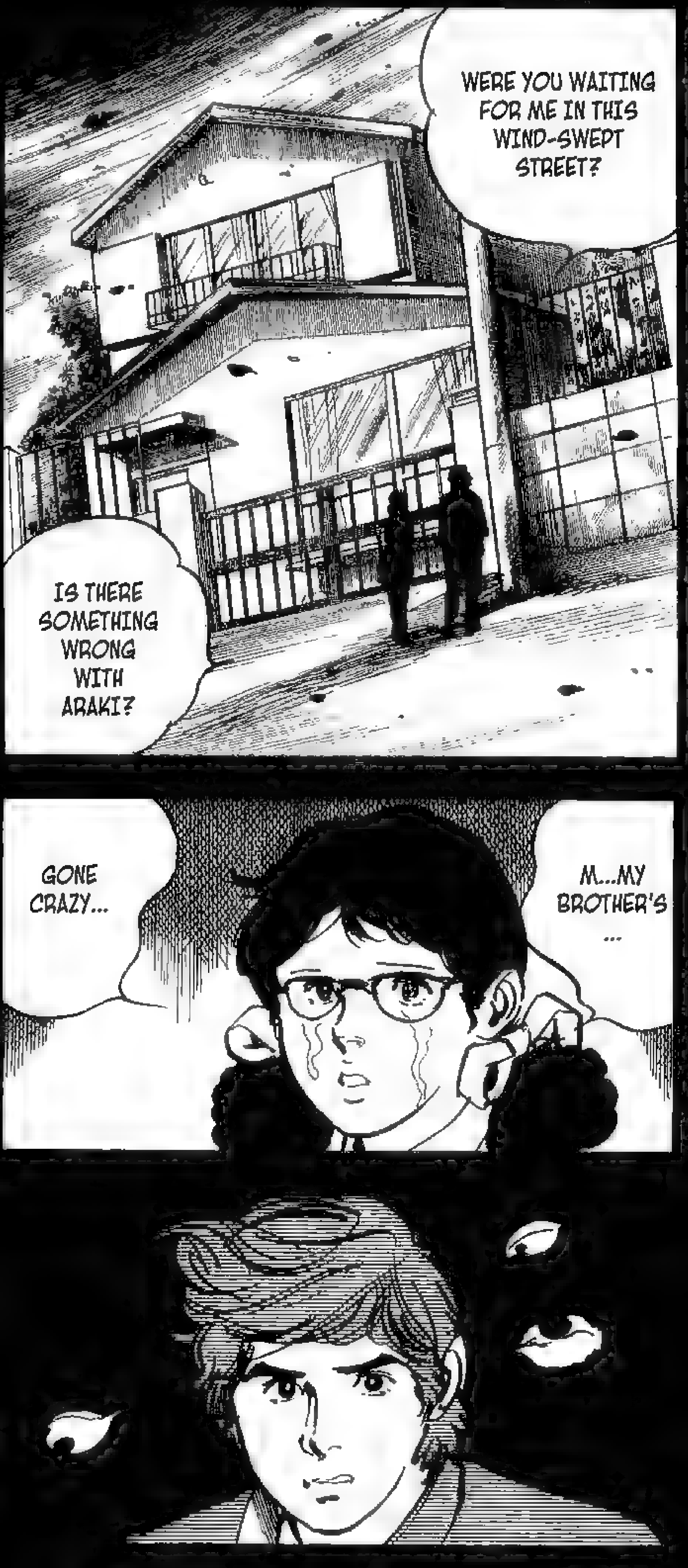
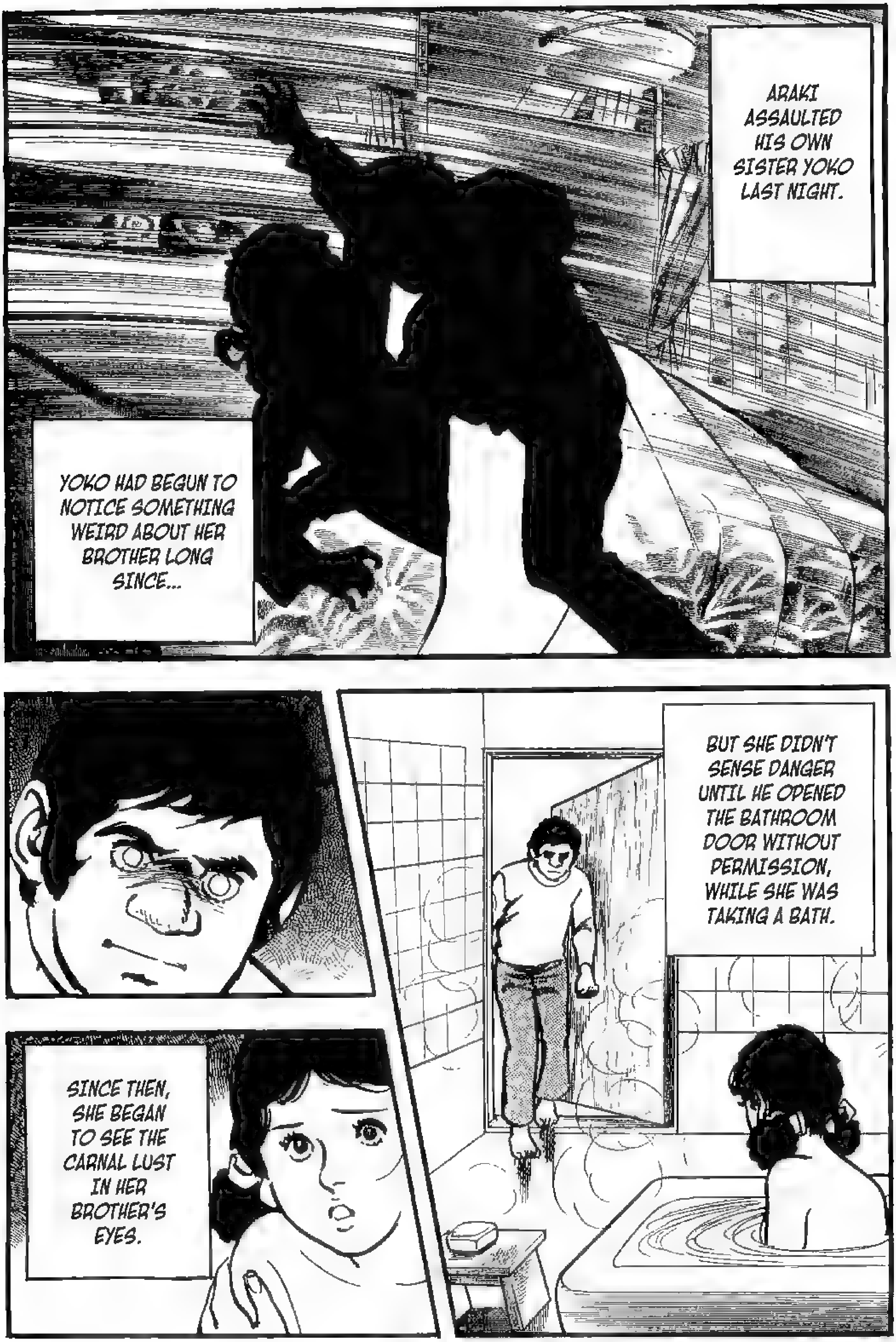
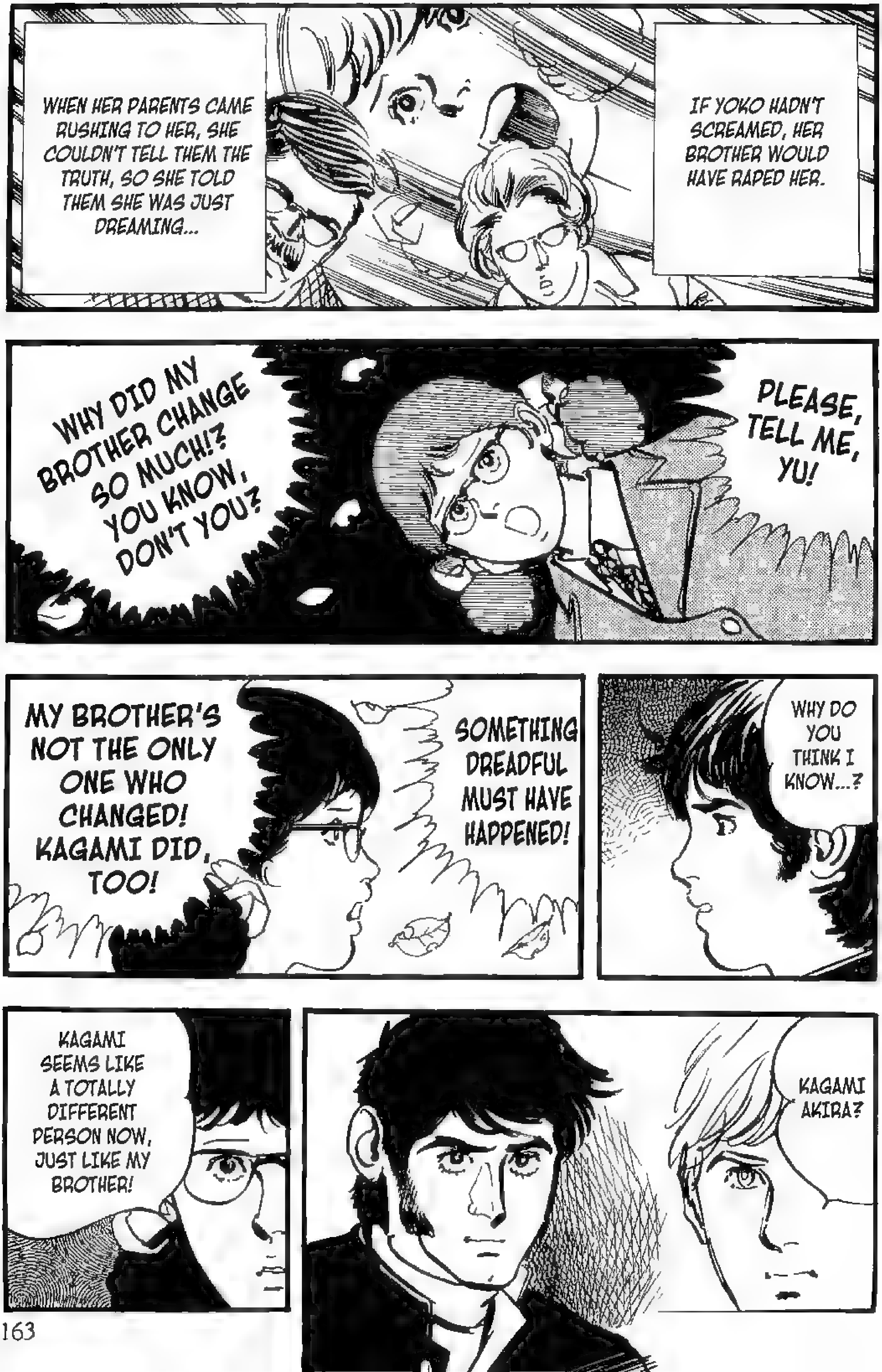
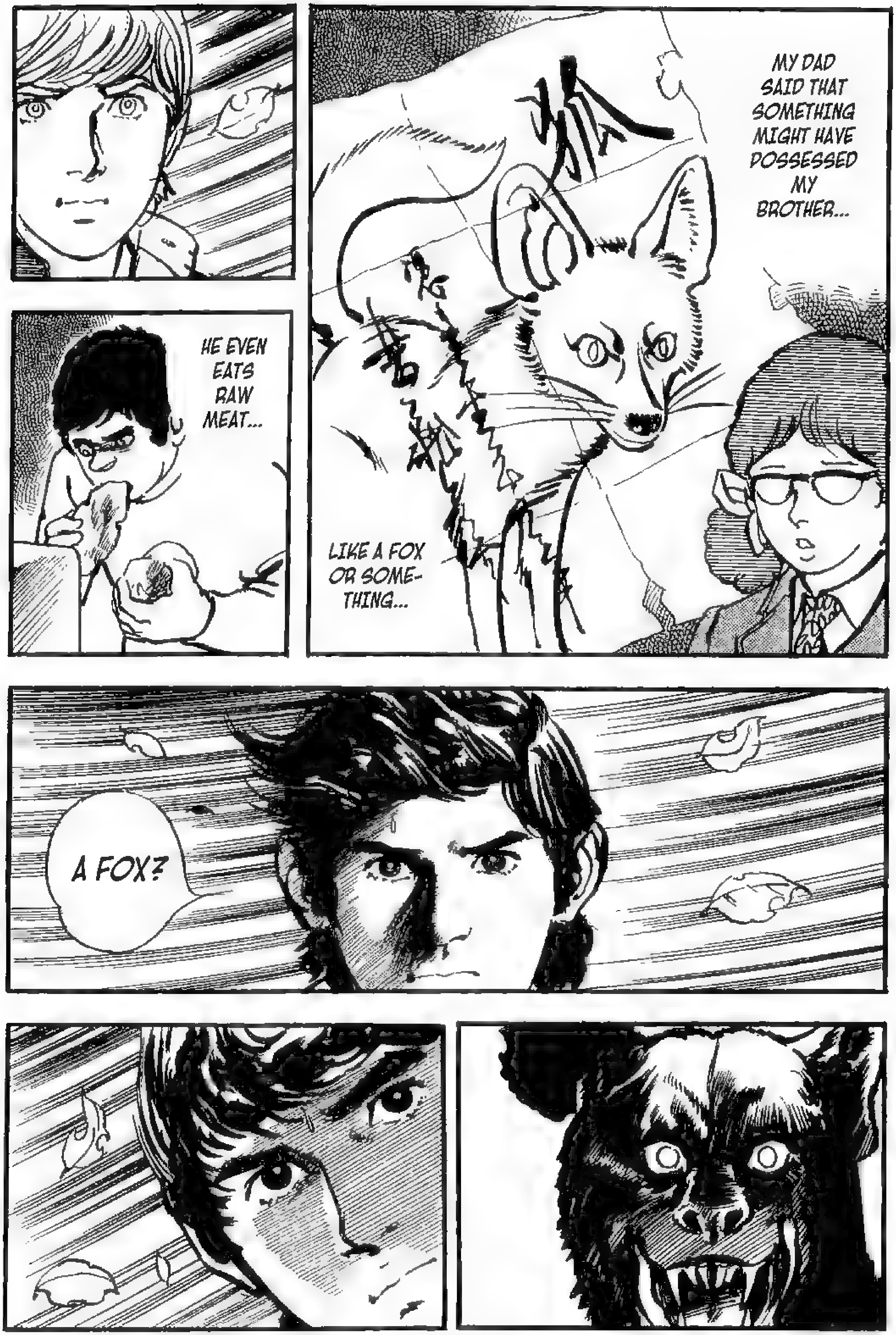
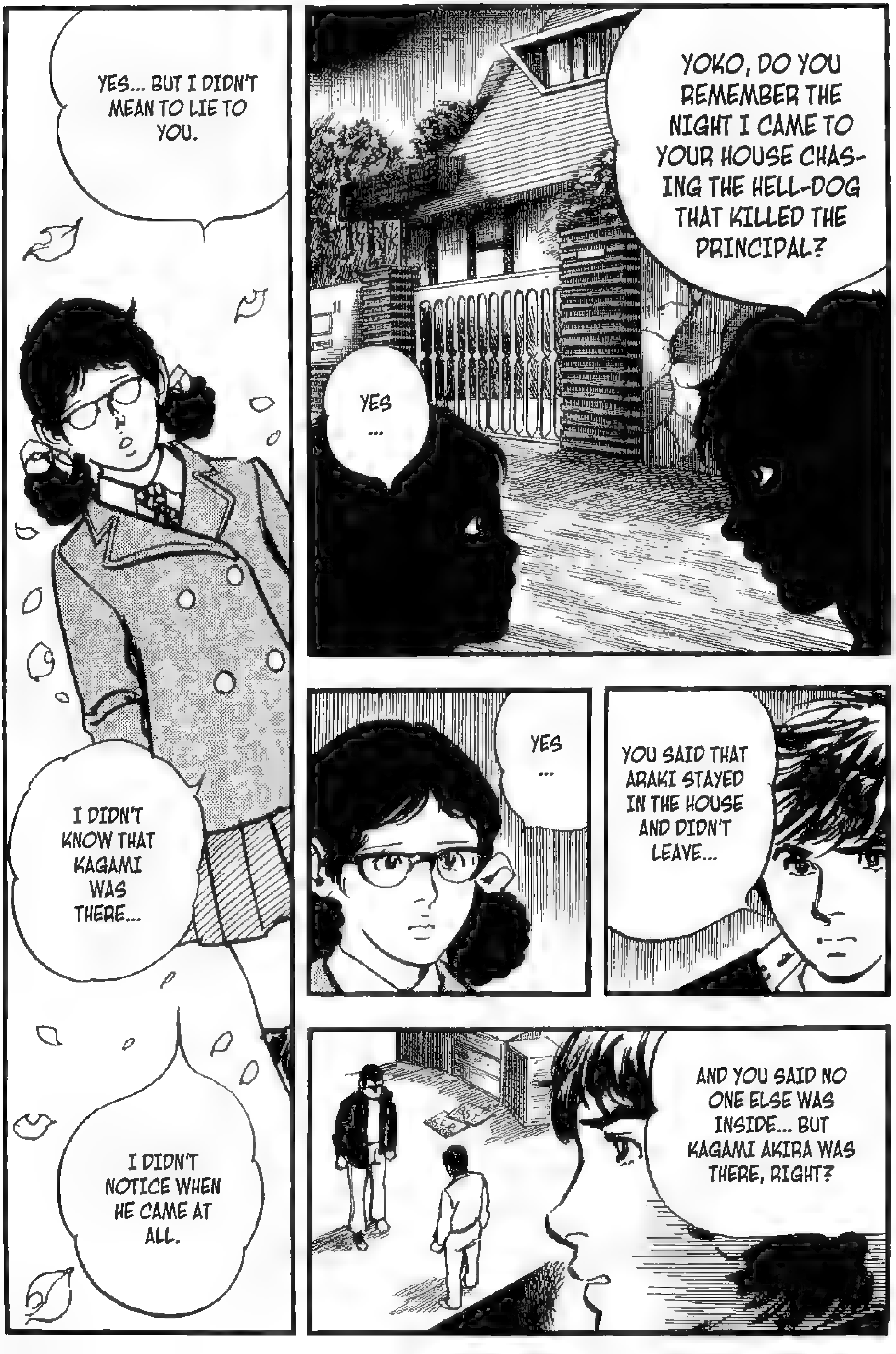
WHAT'S THE MATTER, YOKO...?

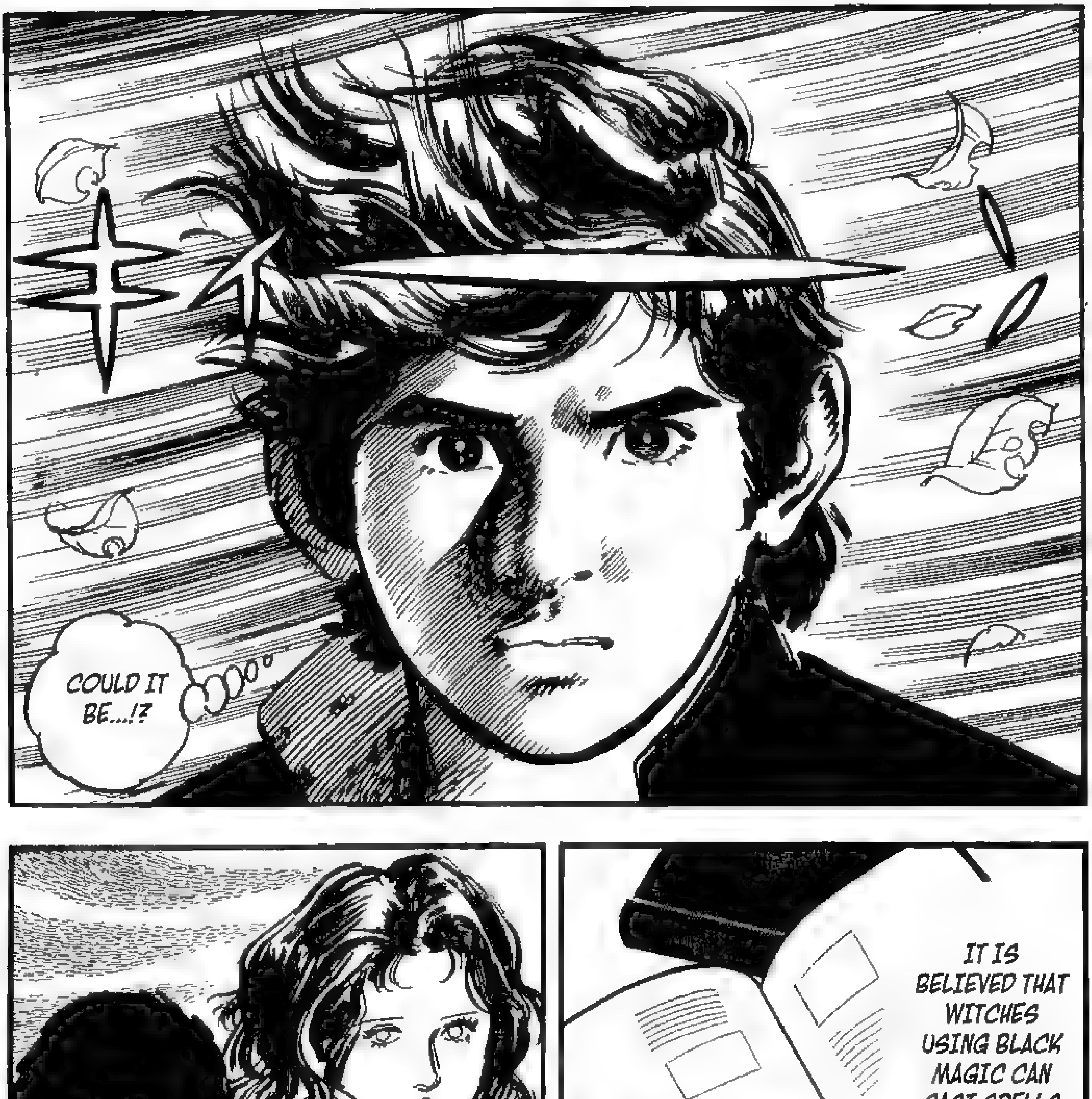

WERE YOU WAITING FOR ME IN THIS WIND-SWEPT STREET?
IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH ARAKI?
M...MY BROTHER'S ...
GONE CRAZY...

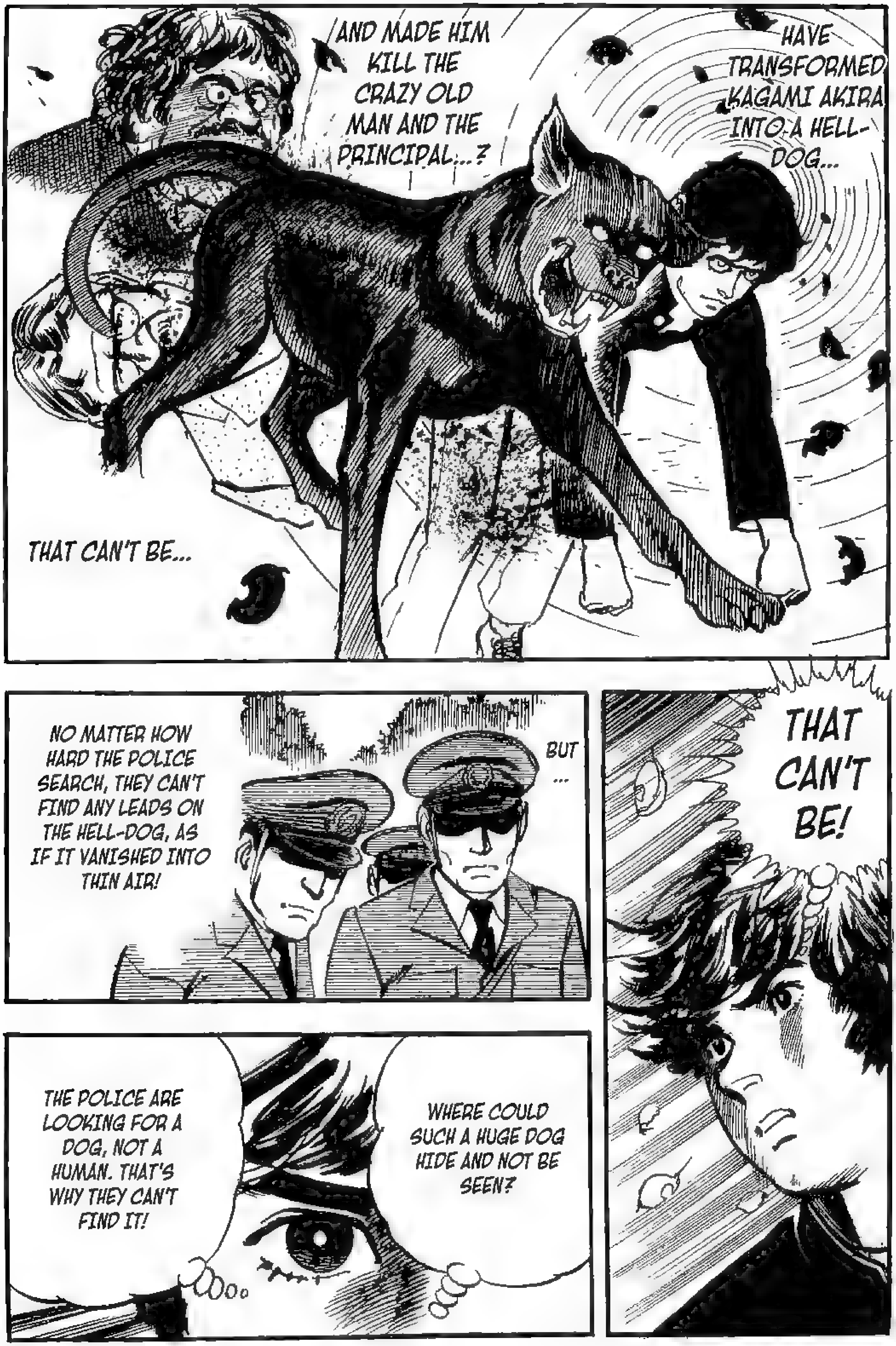

ARAKI ASSAULTED HIS OWN SISTER YOKO LAST NIGHT.
YOKO HAD BEGUN TO NOTICE SOMETHING WEIRD ABOUT HER BROTHER LONG SINCE...
BUT SHE DIDN'T SENSE DANGER UNTIL HE OPENED THE BATHROOM DOOR WITHOUT PERMISSION, WHILE SHE WAS TAKING A BATH.
SINCE THEN, SHE BEGAN TO SEE THE CARNAL LUST IN HER BROTHER'S EYES.

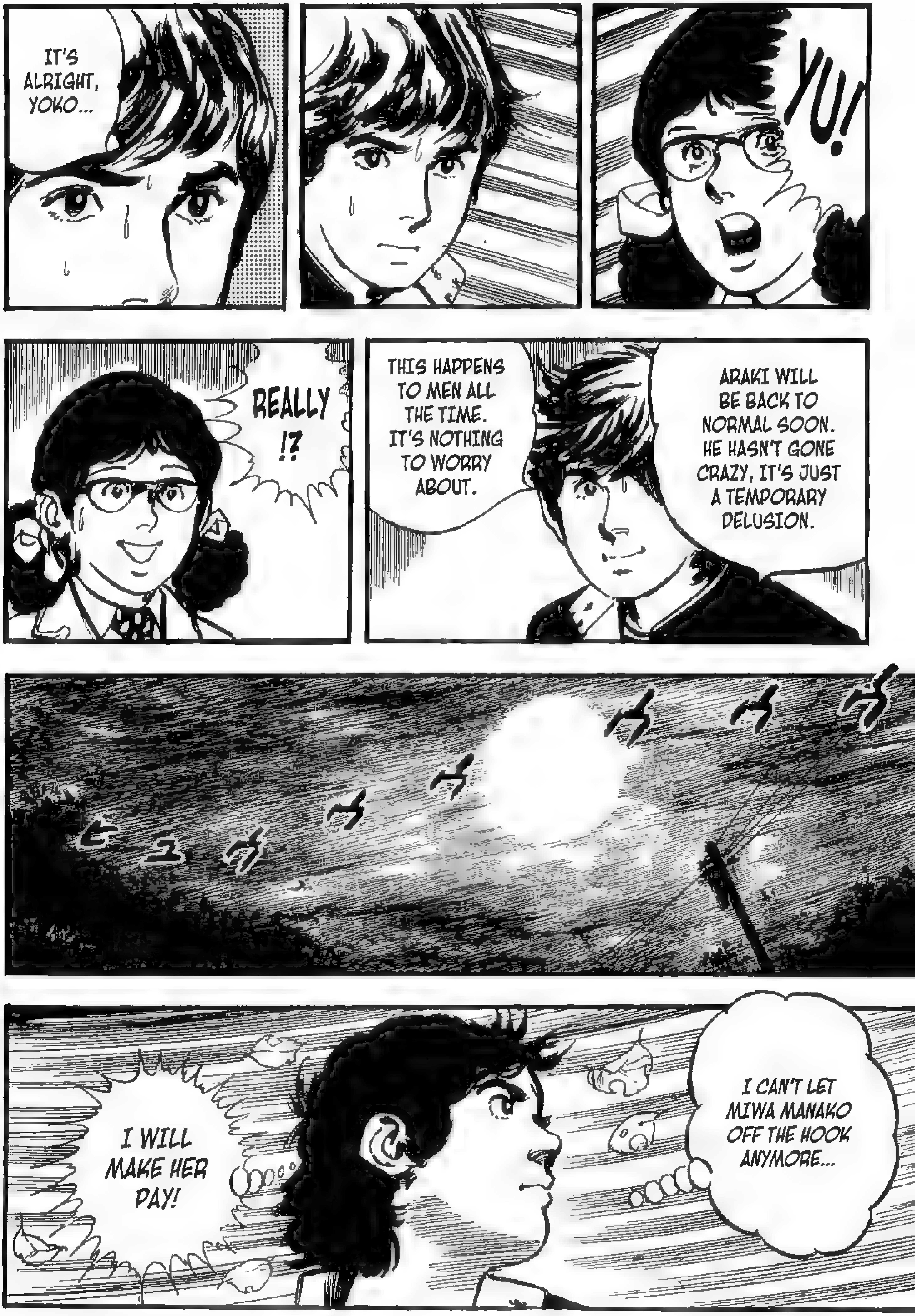

WHEN HER PARENTS CAME RUSHING TO HER, SHE COULDN'T TELL THEM THE TRUTH, SO SHE TOLD THEM SHE WAS JUST DREAMING...
IF YOKO HADN'T SCREAMED, HER BROTHER WOULD HAVE RAPED HER.
WHY DID MY BROTHER CHANGE SO MUCH!? YOU KNOW, DON'T YOU?
PLEASE, TELL ME, YU!
MY BROTHER'S NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO CHANGED! KAGAMI DID, TOO!
SOMETHING DREADFUL MUST HAVE HAPPENED!
WHY DO YOU THINK I KNOW...?
KAGAMI SEEMS LIKE A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON NOW, JUST LIKE MY BROTHER!
KAGAMI AKIRA?

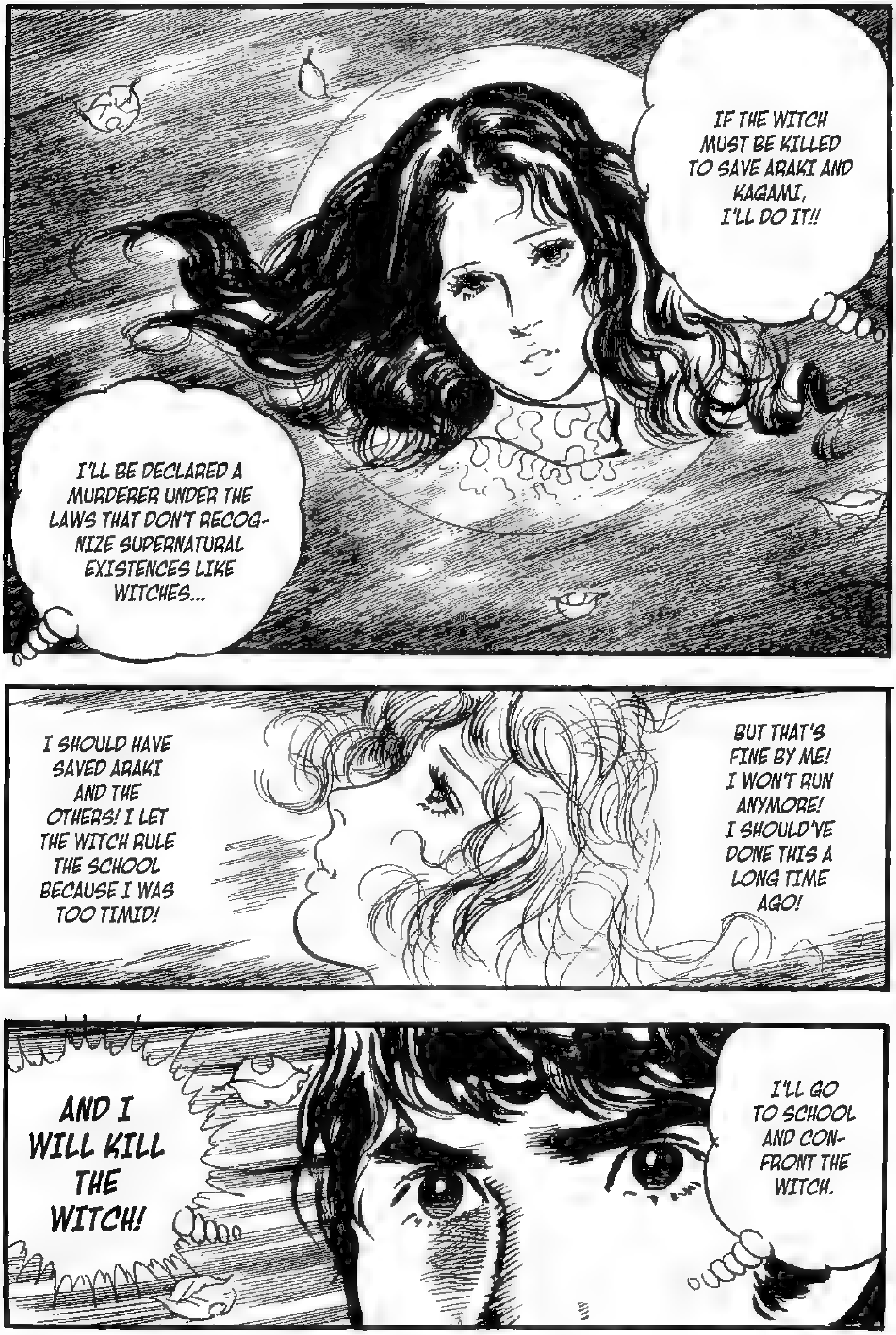

MY DAD SAID THAT SOMETHING MIGHT HAVE POSSESSED MY BROTHER...
LIKE A FOX OR SOME-THING...
HE EVEN EATS RAW MEAT...
A FOX?


YOKO, DO YOU REMEMBER THE NIGHT I CAME TO YOUR HOUSE CHASING THE HELL-DOG THAT KILLED THE PRINCIPAL?
YES ...
YOU SAID THAT ARAKI STAYED IN THE HOUSE AND DIDN'T LEAVE...
YES ...
AND YOU SAID NO ONE ELSE WAS INSIDE... BUT KAGAMI AKIRA WAS THERE, RIGHT?
YES... BUT I DIDN'T MEAN TO LIE TO YOU.
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT KAGAMI WAS THERE...
I DIDN'T NOTICE WHEN HE CAME AT ALL.


COULD IT BE...!?
IT IS BELIEVED THAT WITCHES USING BLACK MAGIC CAN CAST SPELLS ON PEOPLE, AND EVEN TURN THEM INTO ANIMALS...
COULD MIWA MANAKO...


HAVE TRANSFORMED KAGAMI AKIRA INTO A HELL-DOG...
AND MADE HIM KILL THE CRAZY OLD MAN AND THE PRINCIPAL...?
THAT CAN'T BE...
THAT CAN'T BE!
BUT ...
NO MATTER HOW HARD THE POLICE SEARCH, THEY CAN'T FIND ANY LEADS ON THE HELL-DOG, AS IF IT VANISHED INTO THIN AIR!
WHERE COULD SUCH A HUGE DOG HIDE AND NOT BE SEEN?
THE POLICE ARE LOOKING FOR A DOG, NOT A HUMAN. THAT'S WHY THEY CAN'T FIND IT!


IT'S ALRIGHT, YOKO...
YU!
REALLY !?
THIS HAPPENS TO MEN ALL THE TIME. IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
ARAKI WILL BE BACK TO NORMAL SOON. HE HASN'T GONE CRAZY, IT'S JUST A TEMPORARY DELUSION.
I WILL MAKE HER PAY!
I CAN'T LET MIWA MANAKO OFF THE HOOK ANYMORE...


IF THE WITCH MUST BE KILLED TO SAVE ARAKI AND KAGAMI, I'LL DO IT!!
I'LL BE DECLARED A MURDERER UNDER THE LAWS THAT DON'T RECOGNIZE SUPERNATURAL EXISTENCES LIKE WITCHES...
BUT THAT'S FINE BY ME! I WON'T RUN ANYMORE! I SHOULD'VE DONE THIS A LONG TIME AGO!
I SHOULD HAVE SAVED ARAKI AND THE OTHERS! I LET THE WITCH RULE THE SCHOOL BECAUSE I WAS TOO TIMID!
I'LL GO TO SCHOOL AND CONFRONT THE WITCH.
AND I WILL KILL THE WITCH!

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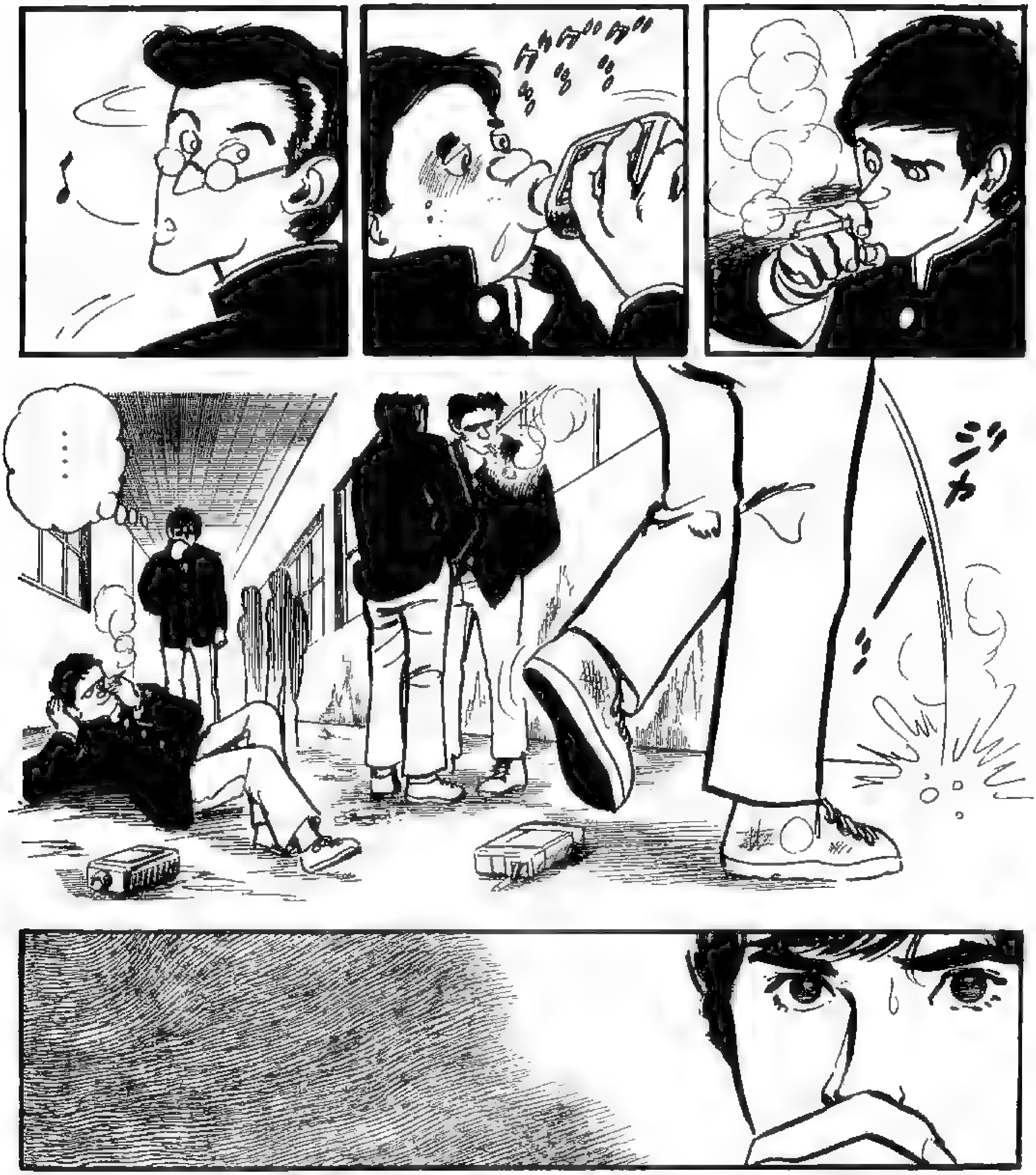
URK!



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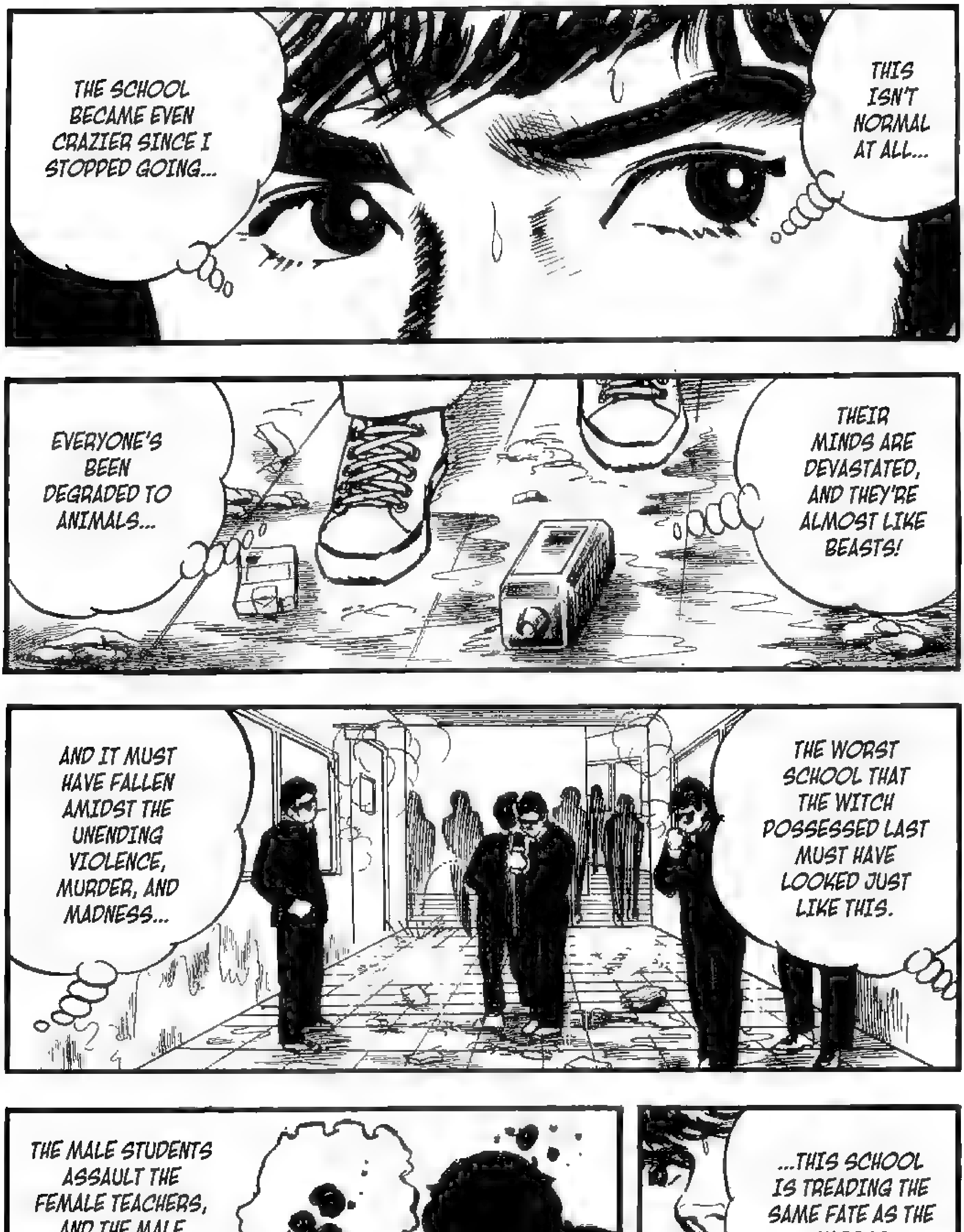
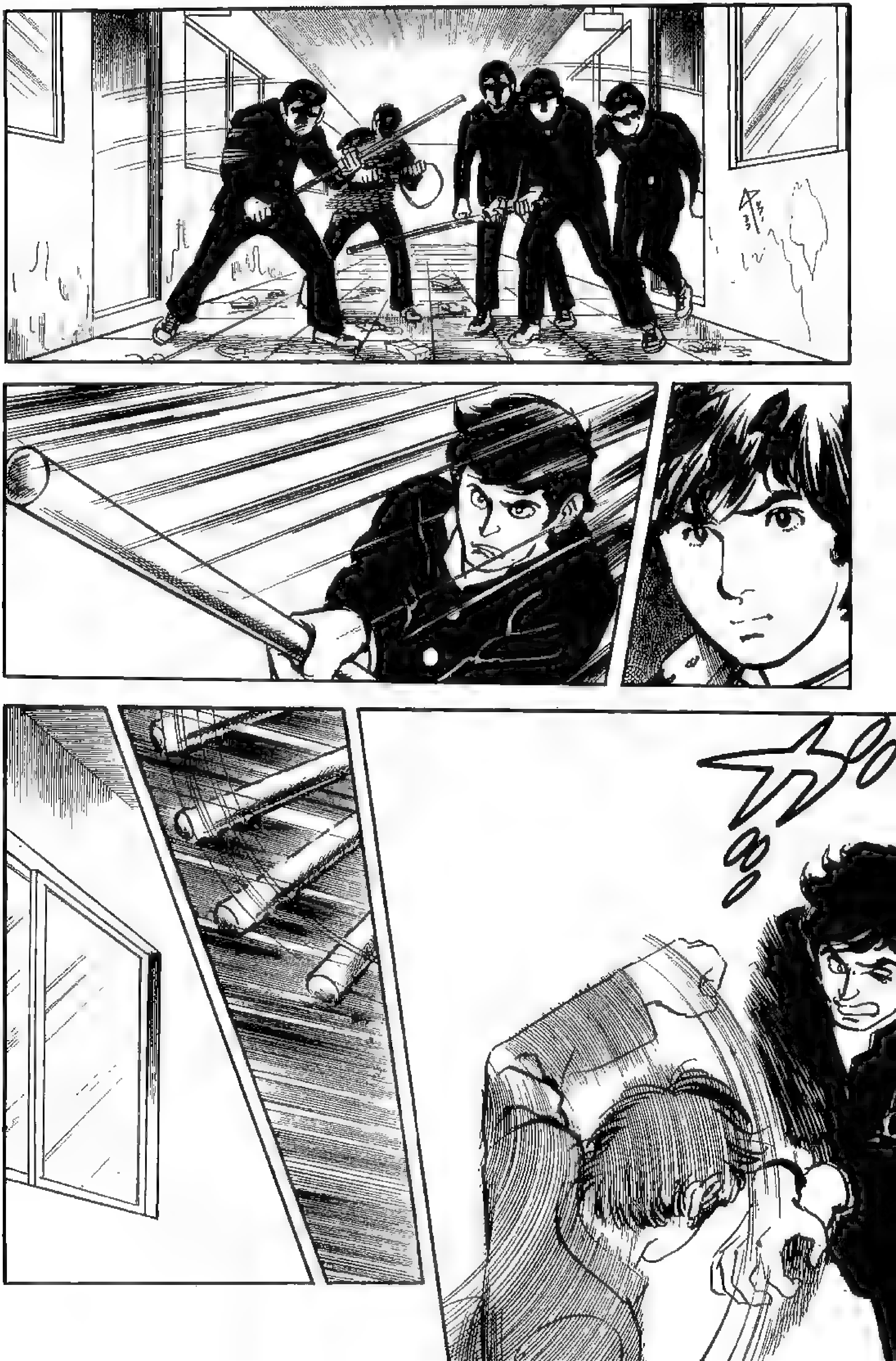

THIS ISN'T NORMAL AT ALL...
THE SCHOOL BECAME EVEN CRAZIER SINCE I STOPPED GOING...
THEIR MINDS ARE DEVASTATED, AND THEY'RE ALMOST LIKE BEASTS!
EVERYONE'S BEEN DEGRADED TO ANIMALS...
THE WORST SCHOOL THAT THE WITCH POSSESSED LAST MUST HAVE LOOKED JUST LIKE THIS.
AND IT MUST HAVE FALLEN AMIDST THE UNENDING VIOLENCE, MURDER, AND MADNESS...
...THIS SCHOOL IS TREADING THE SAME FATE AS THE WORST SCHOOL...!
THE MALE STUDENTS ASSAULT THE FEMALE TEACHERS, AND THE MALE TEACHERS ASSAULT THE FEMALE STUDENTS...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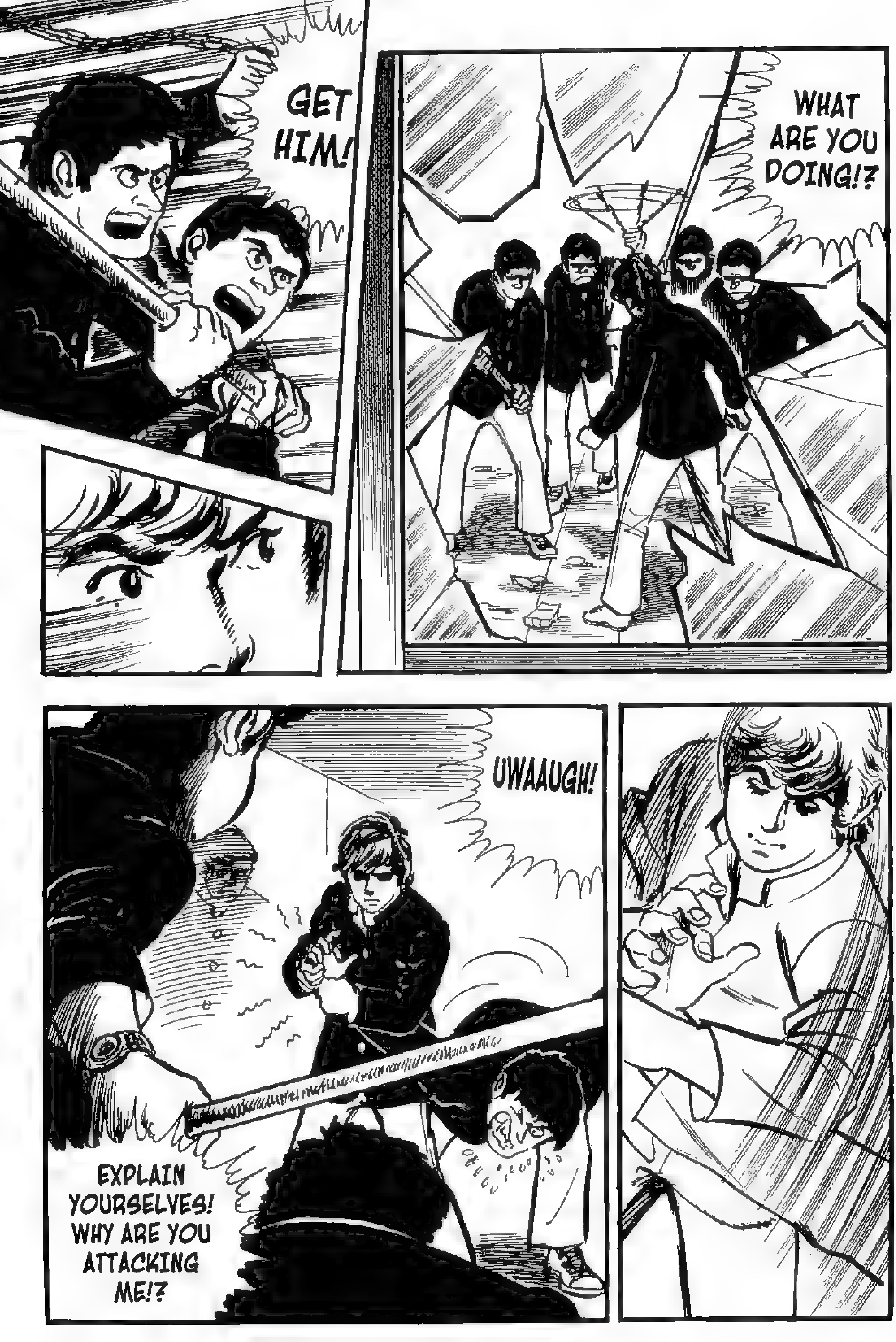
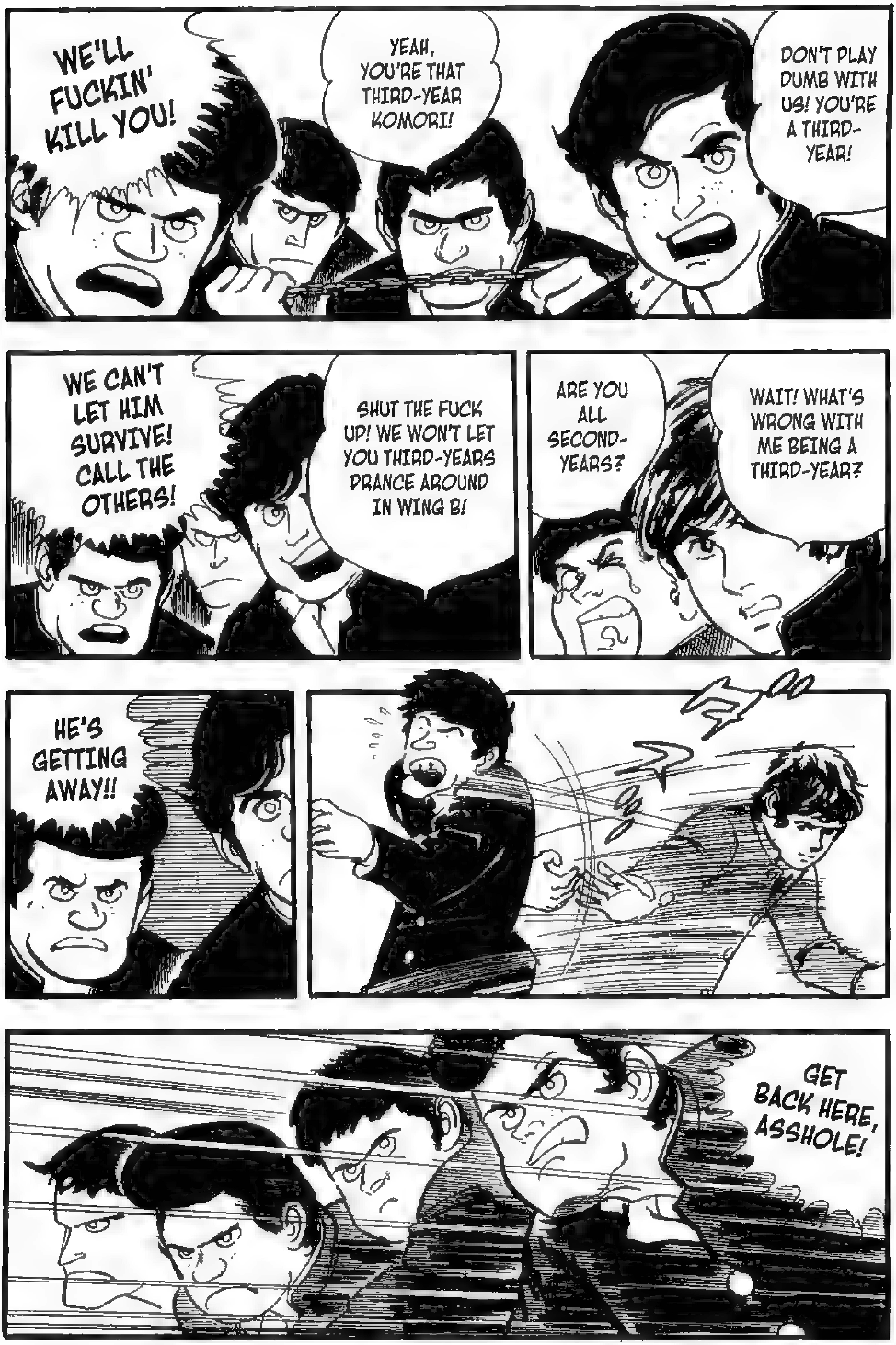
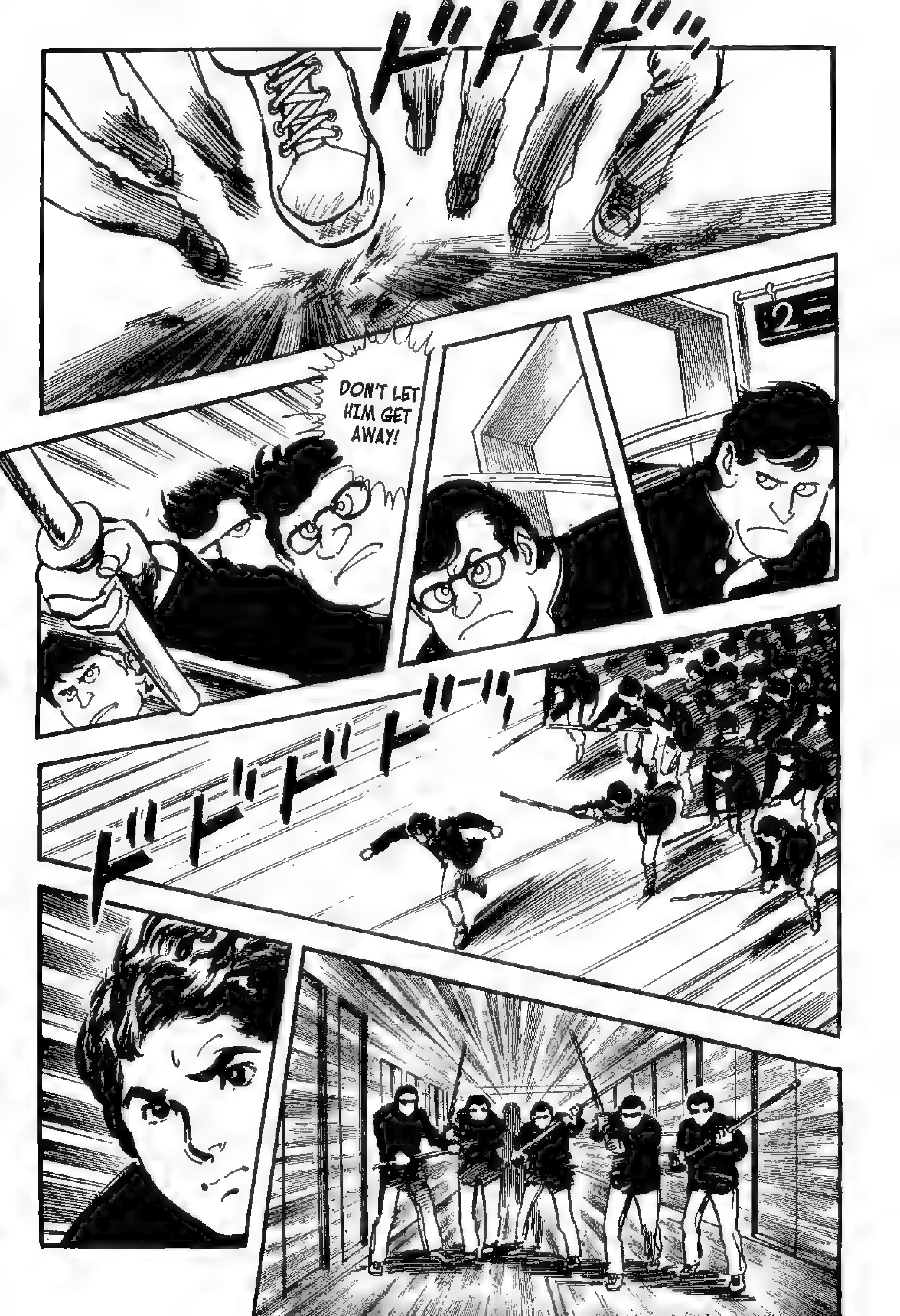

GET HIM!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
UWAAUGH!
EXPLAIN YOURSELVES! WHY ARE YOU ATTACKING ME!?


DON'T PLAY DUMB WITH US! YOU'RE A THIRD-YEAR!
YEAH, YOU'RE THAT THIRD-YEAR KOMORI!
WE'LL FUCKIN' KILL YOU!
WAIT! WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME BEING A THIRD-YEAR?
ARE YOU ALL SECOND-YEARS?
SHUT THE FUCK UP! WE WON'T LET YOU THIRD-YEARS PRANCE AROUND IN WING B!
WE CAN'T LET HIM SURVIVE! CALL THE OTHERS!
HE'S GETTING AWAY!!
GET BACK HERE, ASSHOLE!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DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!
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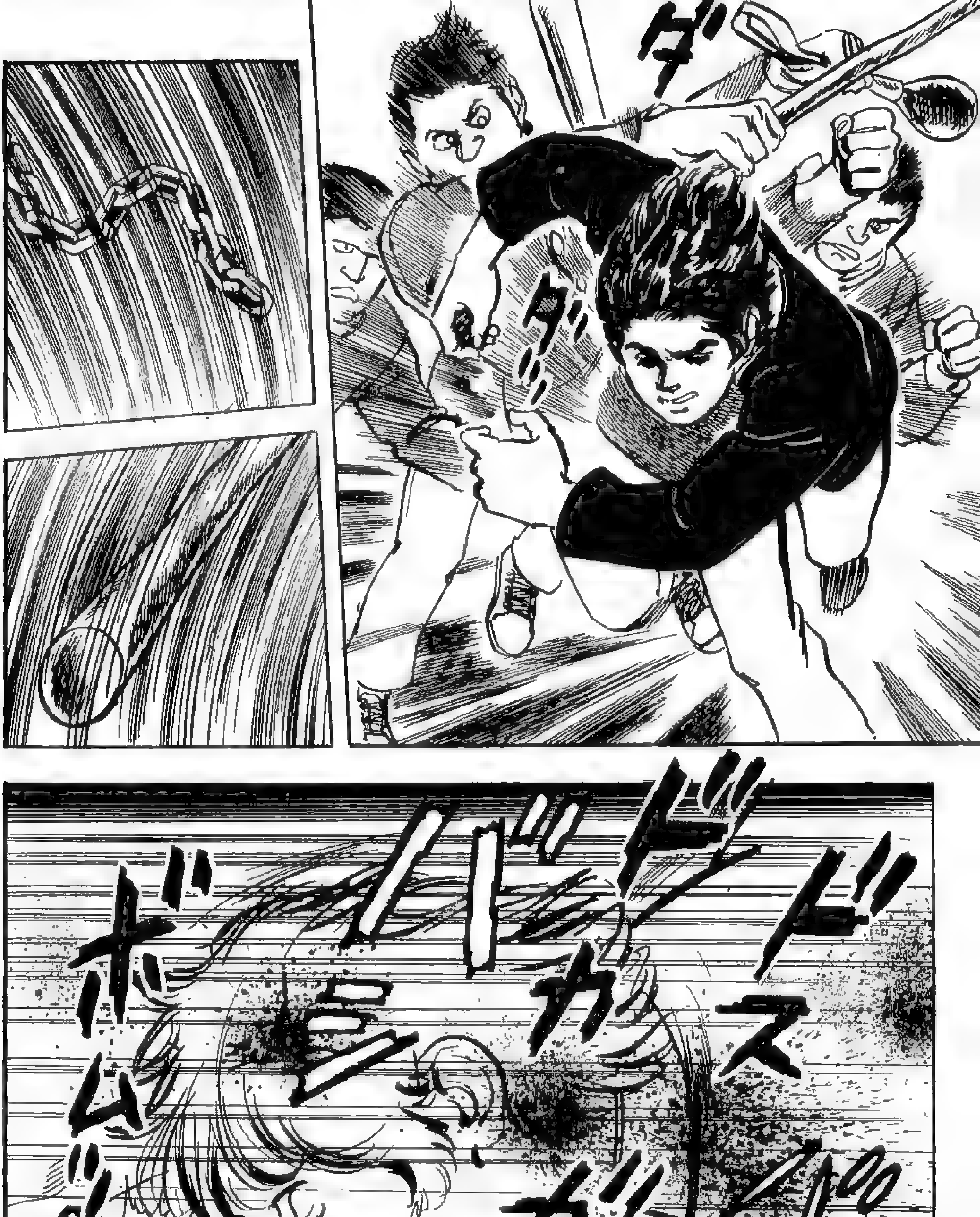
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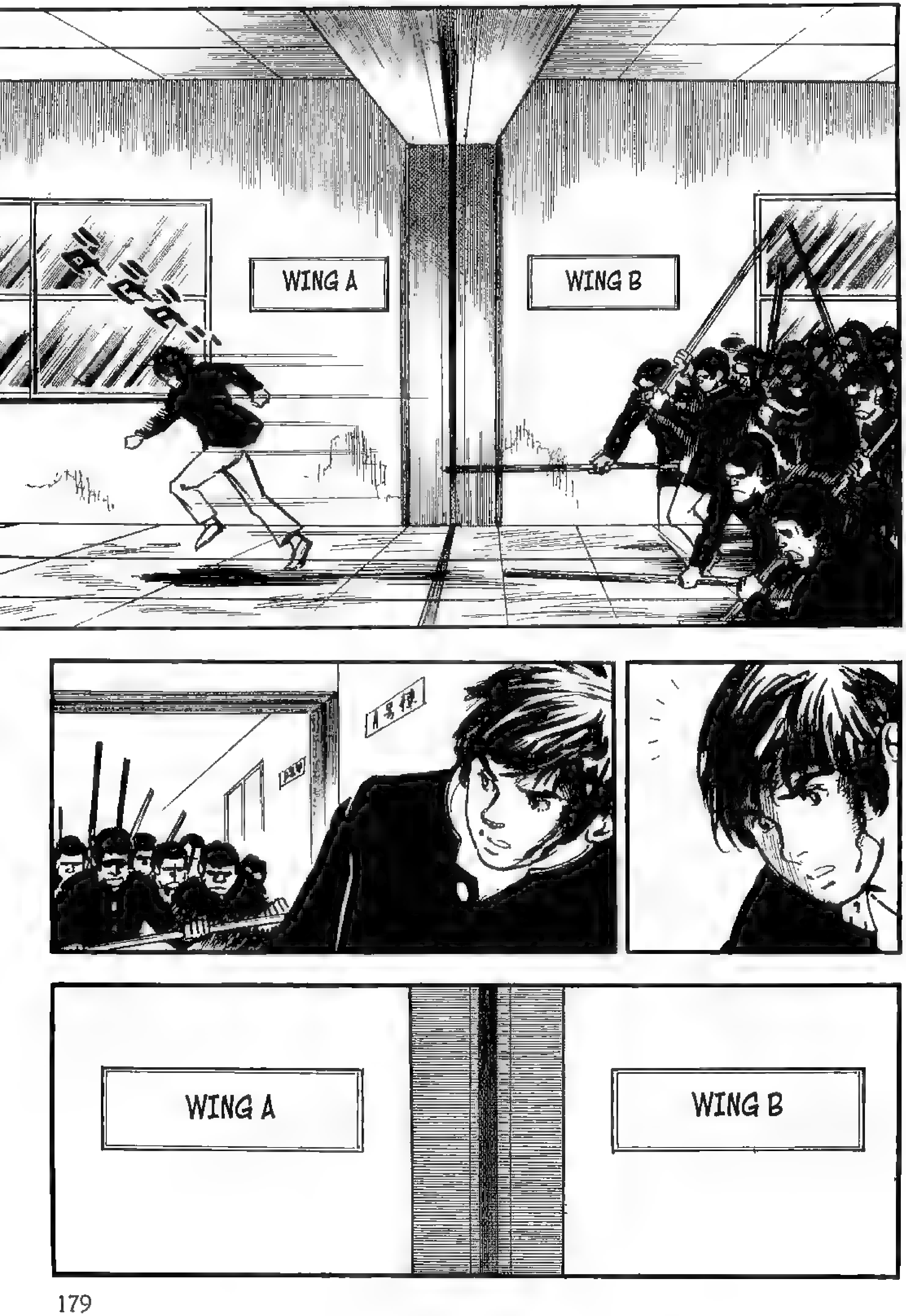
WAAAAAAAAAAUGH!


WING B
WING A
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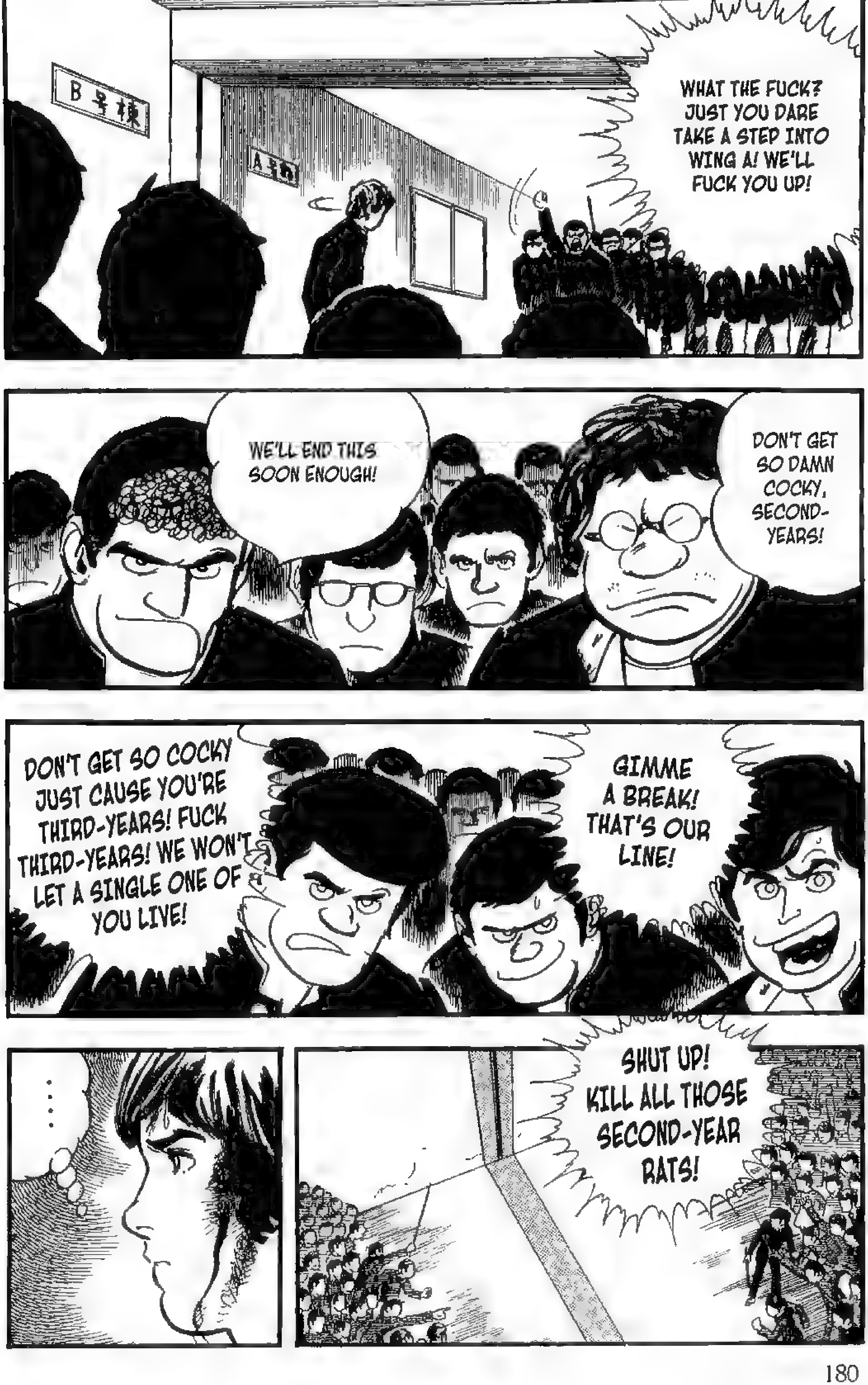
WING A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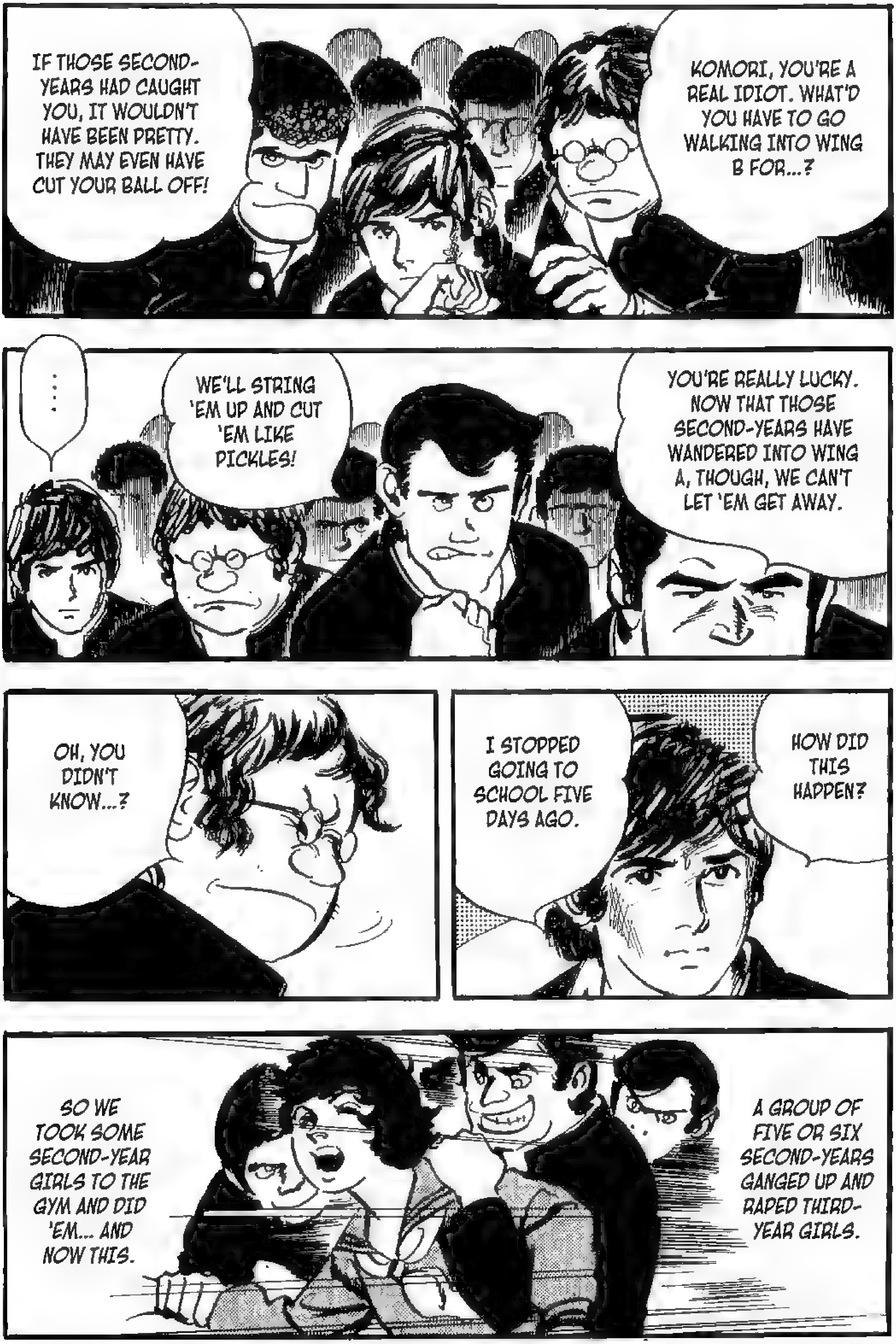
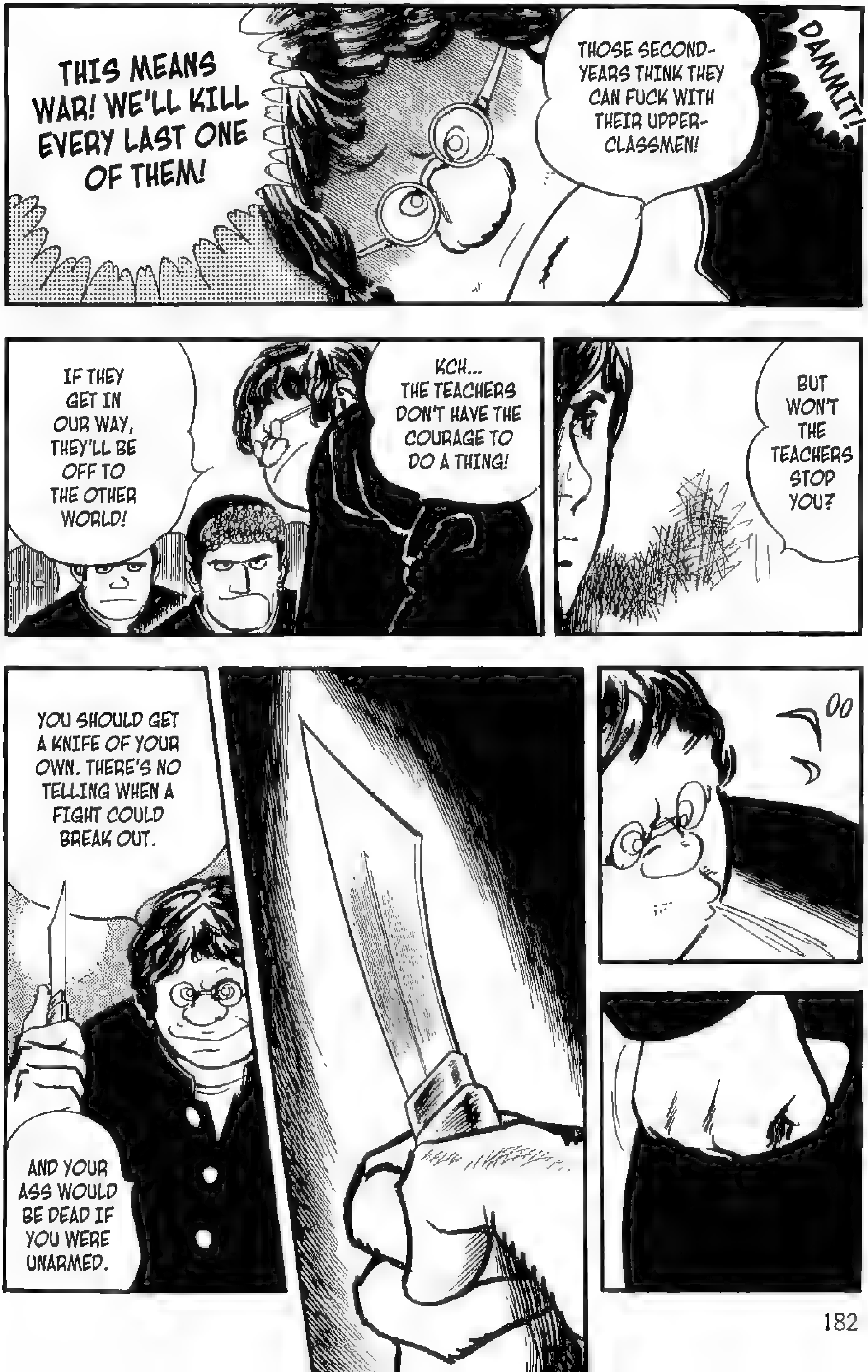
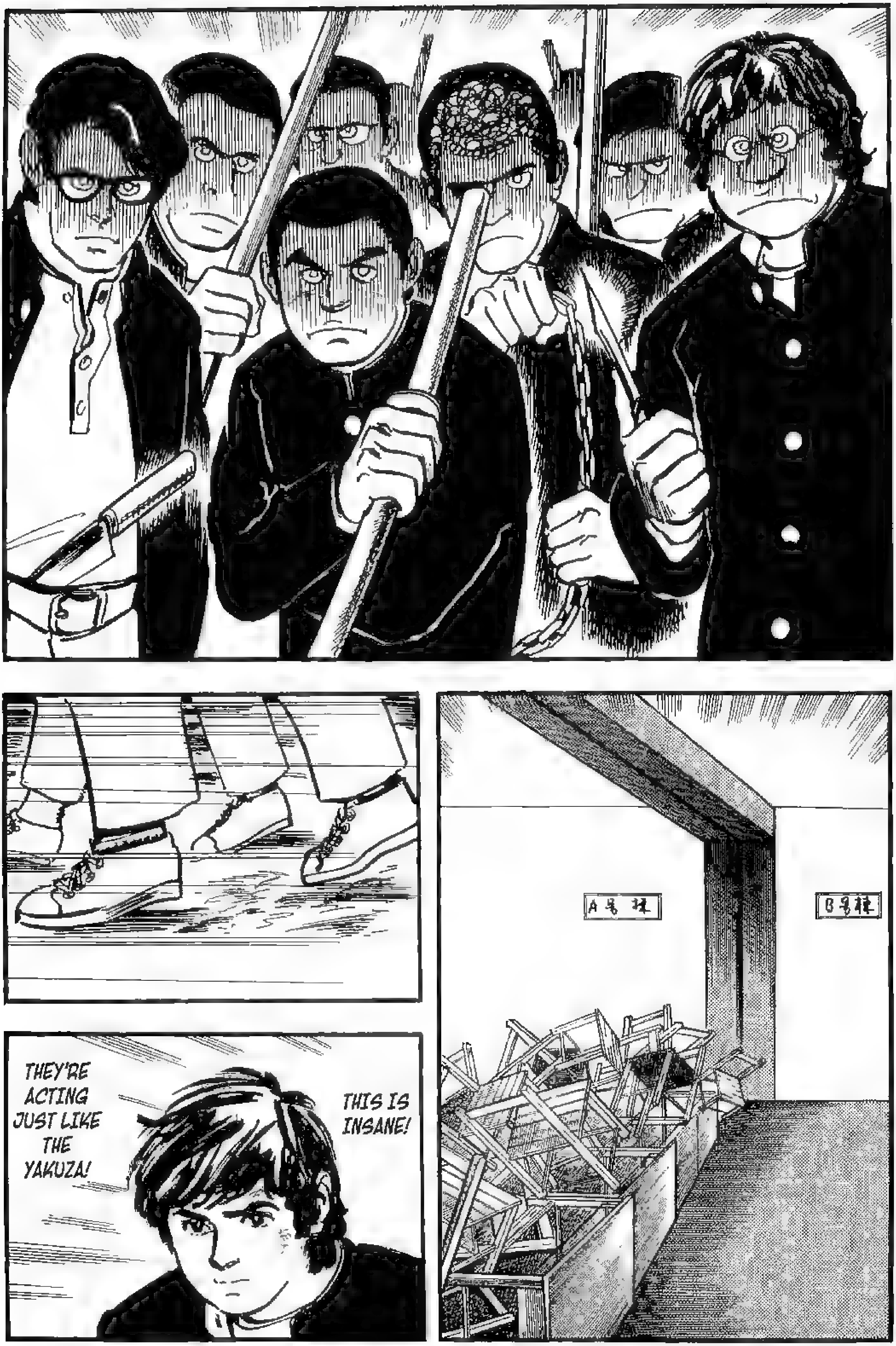
WHAT THE FUCK? JUST YOU DARE TAKE A STEP INTO WING A! WE'LL FUCK YOU UP!
DON'T GET SO DAMN COCKY, SECOND-YEARS!
WE'LL END THIS SOON ENOUGH!
GIMME A BREAK! THAT'S OUR LINE!
DON'T GET SO COCKY JUST CAUSE YOU'RE THIRD-YEARS! FUCK THIRD-YEARS! WE WON'T LET A SINGLE ONE OF YOU LIVE!
SHUT UP! KILL ALL THOSE SECOND-YEAR RATS!
....


KOMORI, YOU'RE A REAL IDIOT. WHAT'D YOU HAVE TO GO WALKING INTO WING B FOR...?
IF THOSE SECOND-YEARS HAD CAUGHT YOU, IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN PRETTY. THEY MAY EVEN HAVE CUT YOUR BALL OFF!
YOU'RE REALLY LUCKY. NOW THAT THOSE SECOND-YEARS HAVE WANDERED INTO WING A, THOUGH, WE CAN'T LET 'EM GET AWAY.
WE'LL STRING 'EM UP AND CUT 'EM LIKE PICKLES!
....
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
I STOPPED GOING TO SCHOOL FIVE DAYS AGO.
OH, YOU DIDN'T KNOW...?
A GROUP OF FIVE OR SIX SECOND-YEARS GANGED UP AND RAPED THIRD-YEAR GIRLS.
SO WE TOOK SOME SECOND-YEAR GIRLS TO THE GYM AND DID 'EM... AND NOW THIS.


DAMMIT!
THOSE SECOND-YEARS THINK THEY CAN FUCK WITH THEIR UPPERCLASSMEN!
THIS MEANS WAR! WE'LL KILL EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM!
BUT WON'T THE TEACHERS STOP YOU?
KCH... THE TEACHERS DON'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO DO A THING!
IF THEY GET IN OUR WAY, THEY'LL BE OFF TO THE OTHER WORLD!
OO
YOU SHOULD GET A KNIFE OF YOUR OWN. THERE'S NO TELLING WHEN A FIGHT COULD BREAK OUT.
AND YOUR ASS WOULD BE DEAD IF YOU WERE UNARMED.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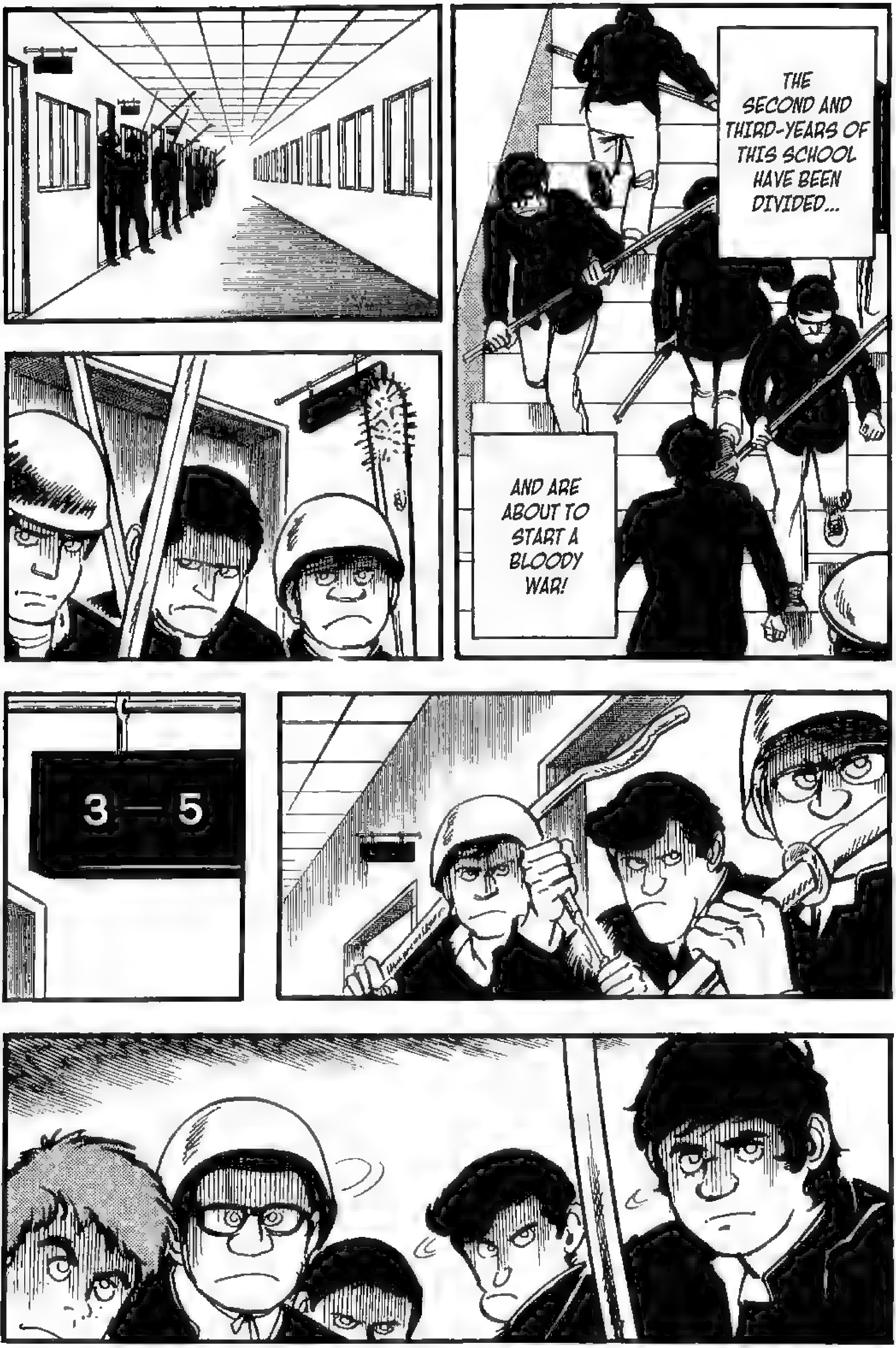
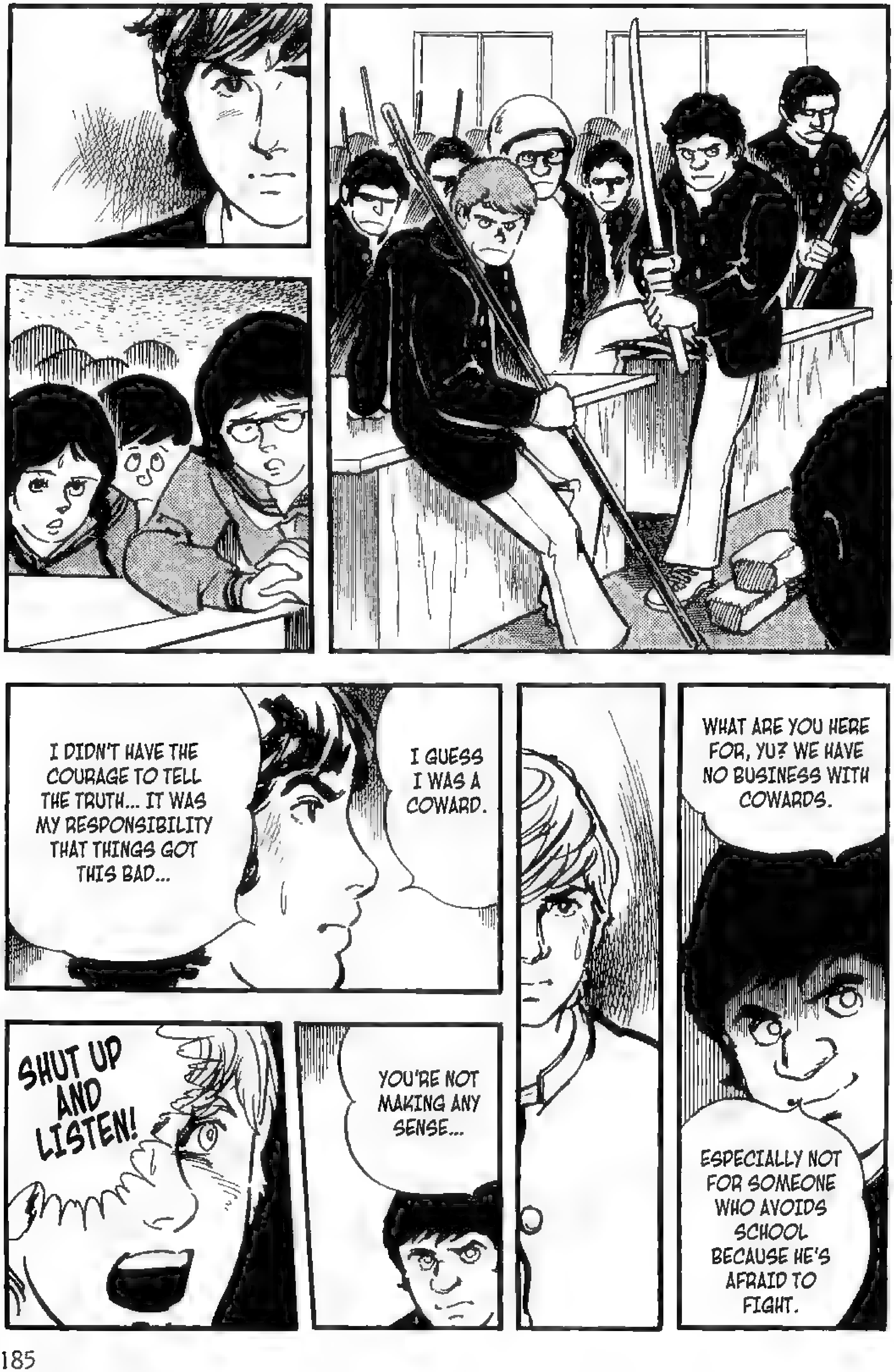
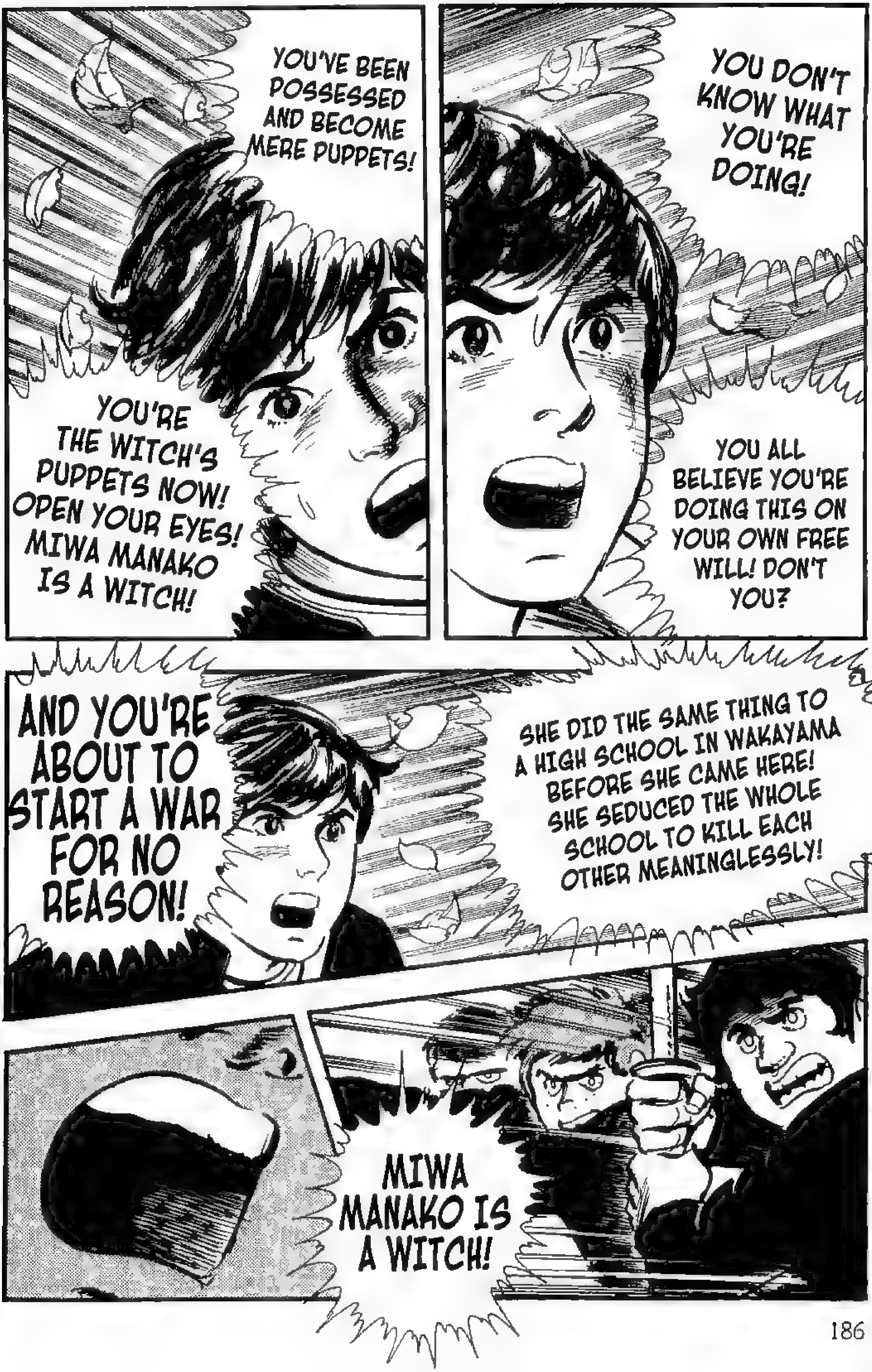
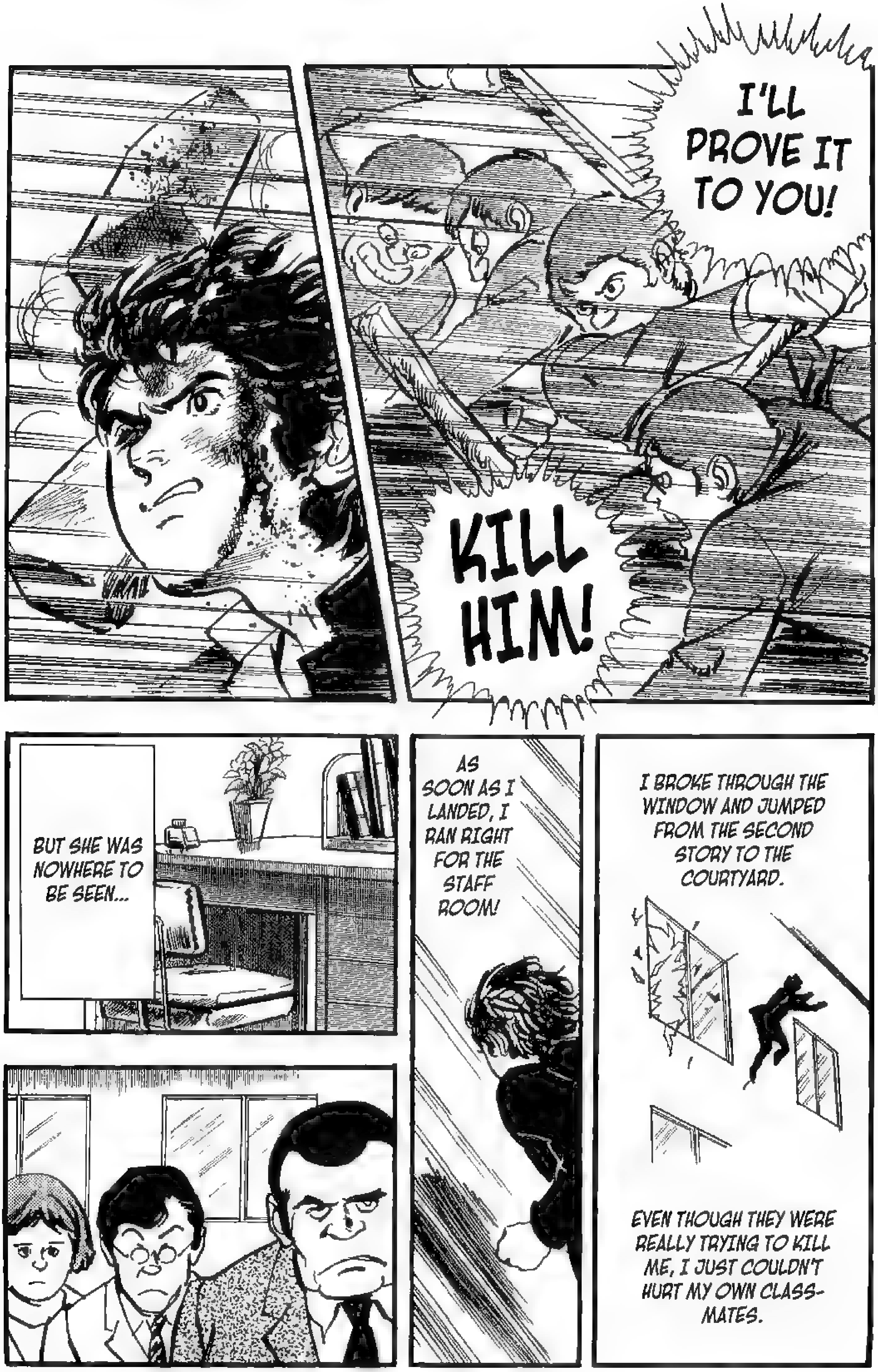
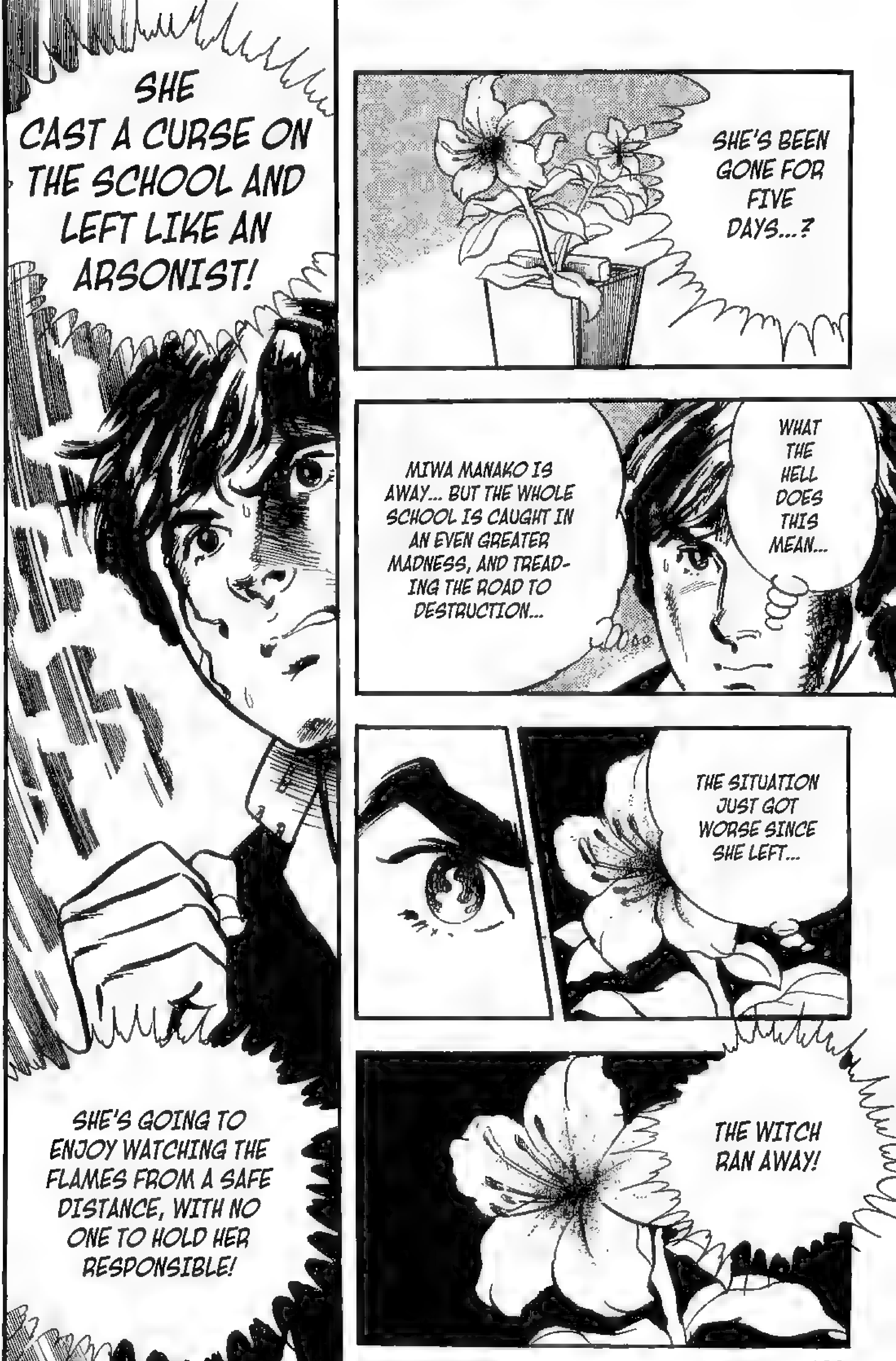
THIS IS INSANE!
THEY'RE ACTING JUST LIKE THE YAKUZA!

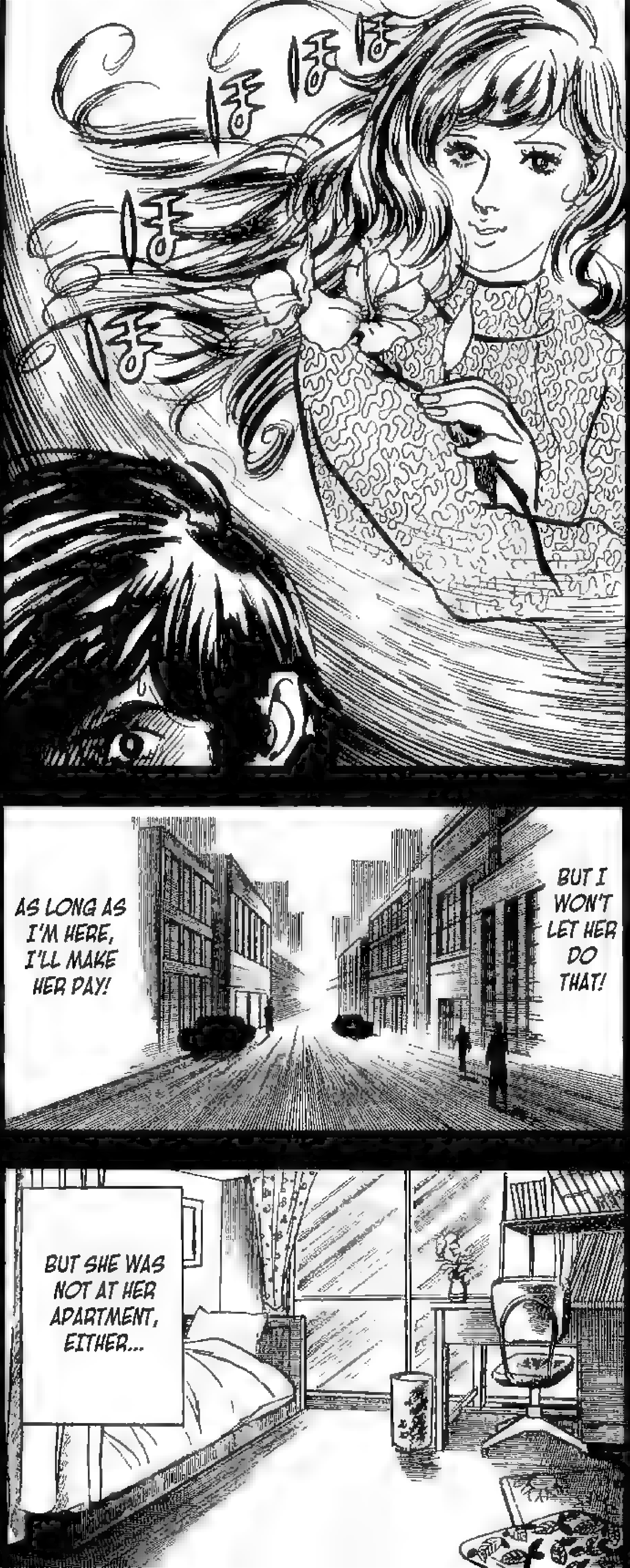

THE SECOND AND THIRD-YEARS OF THIS SCHOOL HAVE BEEN DIVIDED...
AND ARE ABOUT TO START A BLOODY WAR!
3—5


I DIDN'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO TELL THE TRUTH... IT WAS MY RESPONSIBILITY THAT THINGS GOT THIS BAD...
I GUESS I WAS A COWARD.
WHAT ARE YOU HERE FOR, YU? WE HAVE NO BUSINESS WITH COWARDS.
ESPECIALLY NOT FOR SOMEONE WHO AVOIDS SCHOOL BECAUSE HE'S AFRAID TO FIGHT.
YOU'RE NOT MAKING ANY SENSE...
SHUT UP AND LISTEN!


YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!
YOU ALL BELIEVE YOU'RE DOING THIS ON YOUR OWN FREE WILL! DON'T YOU?
YOU'VE BEEN POSSESSED AND BECOME MERE PUPPETS!
YOU'RE THE WITCH'S PUPPETS NOW! OPEN YOUR EYES! MIWA MANAKO IS A WITCH!
SHE DID THE SAME THING TO A HIGH SCHOOL IN WAKAYAMA BEFORE SHE CAME HERE! SHE SEDUCED THE WHOLE SCHOOL TO KILL EACH OTHER MEANINGLESSLY!
AND YOU'RE ABOUT TO START A WAR FOR NO REASON!
MIWA MANAKO IS A WITCH!


I'LL PROVE IT TO YOU!
KILL HIM!
I BROKE THROUGH THE WINDOW AND JUMPED FROM THE SECOND STORY TO THE COURTYARD.
EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE REALLY TRYING TO KILL ME, I JUST COULDN'T HURT MY OWN CLASSMATES.
AS SOON AS I LANDED, I RAN RIGHT FOR THE STAFF ROOM!
BUT SHE WAS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN...


SHE'S BEEN GONE FOR FIVE DAYS...?
WHAT THE HELL DOES THIS MEAN...
MIWA MANAKO IS AWAY... BUT THE WHOLE SCHOOL IS CAUGHT IN AN EVEN GREATER MADNESS, AND TREADING THE ROAD TO DESTRUCTION...
THE SITUATION JUST GOT WORSE SINCE SHE LEFT...
THE WITCH RAN AWAY!
SHE CAST A CURSE ON THE SCHOOL AND LEFT LIKE AN ARSONIST!
SHE'S GOING TO ENJOY WATCHING THE FLAMES FROM A SAFE DISTANCE, WITH NO ONE TO HOLD HER RESPONSIBLE!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BUT I WON'T LET HER DO THAT!
AS LONG AS I'M HERE, I'LL MAKE HER PAY!
BUT SHE WAS NOT AT HER APARTMENT, EITHER...

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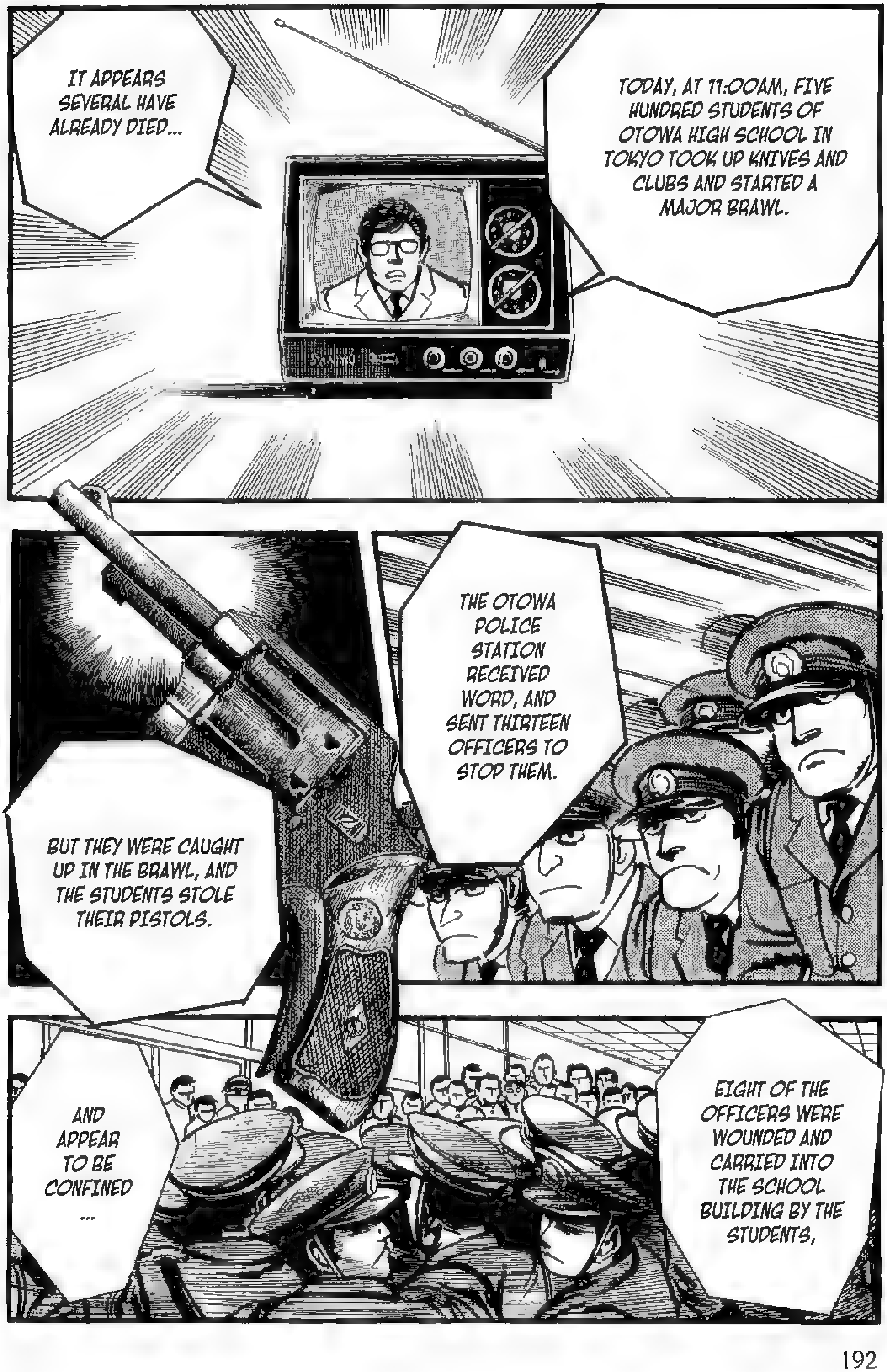
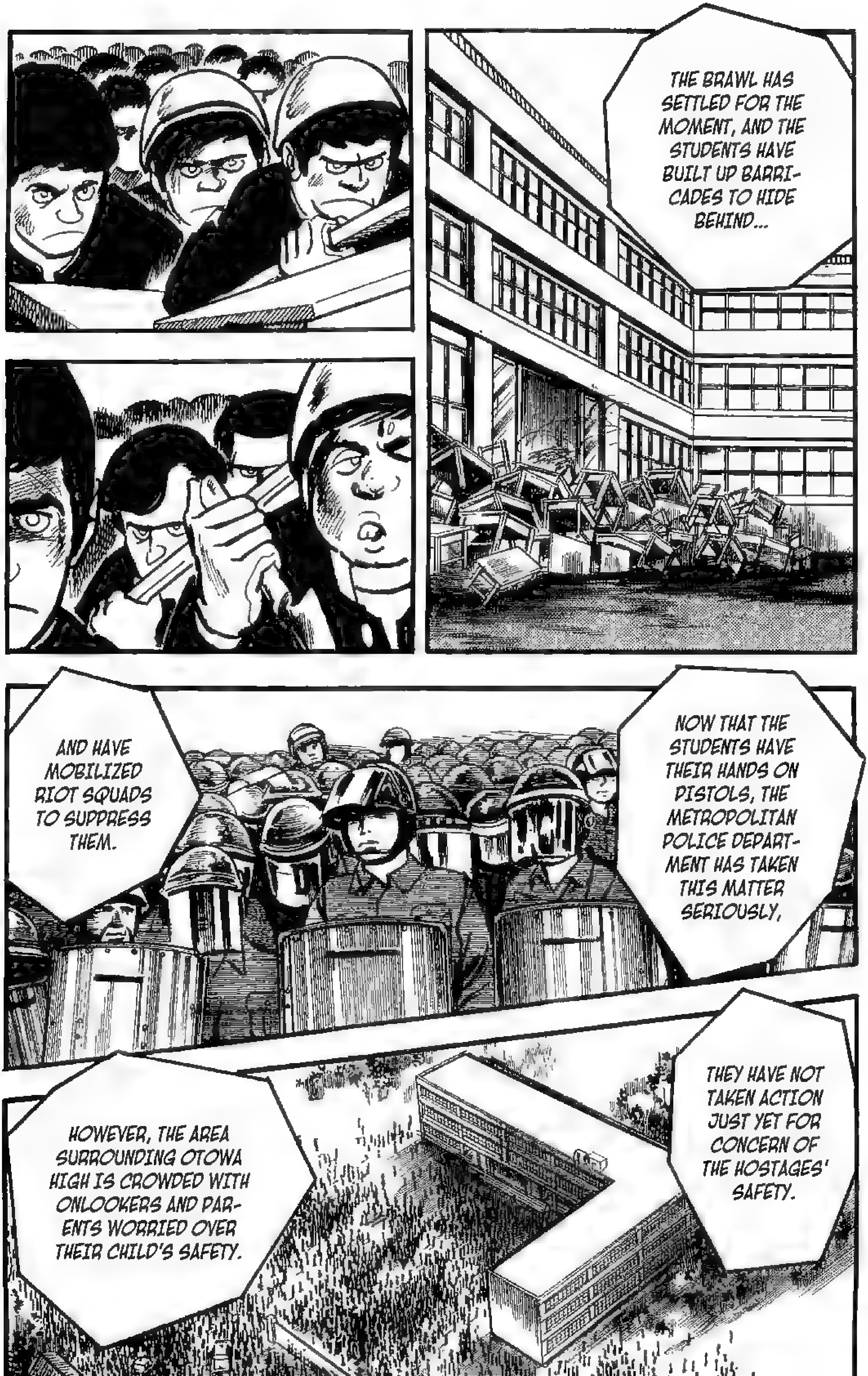
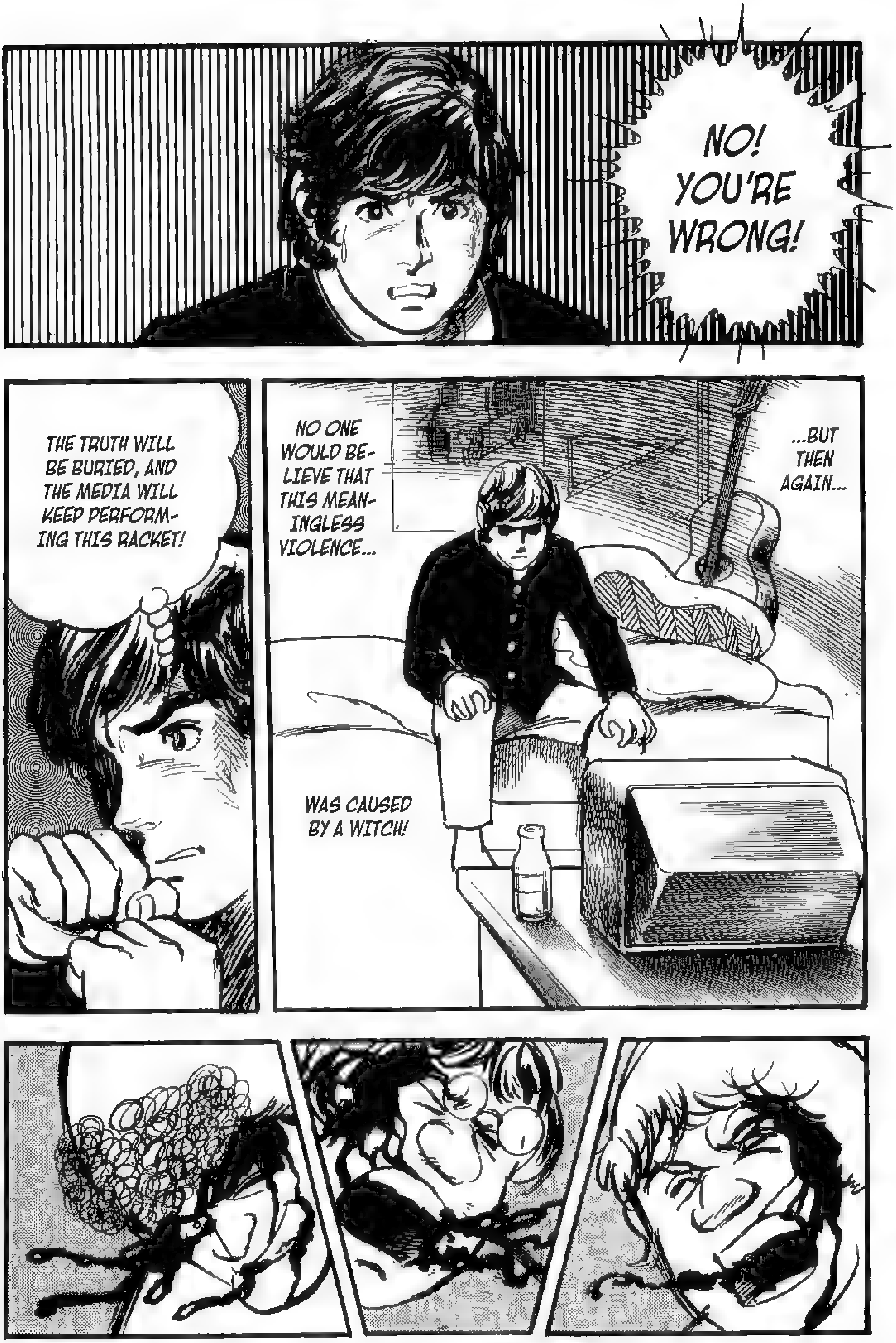
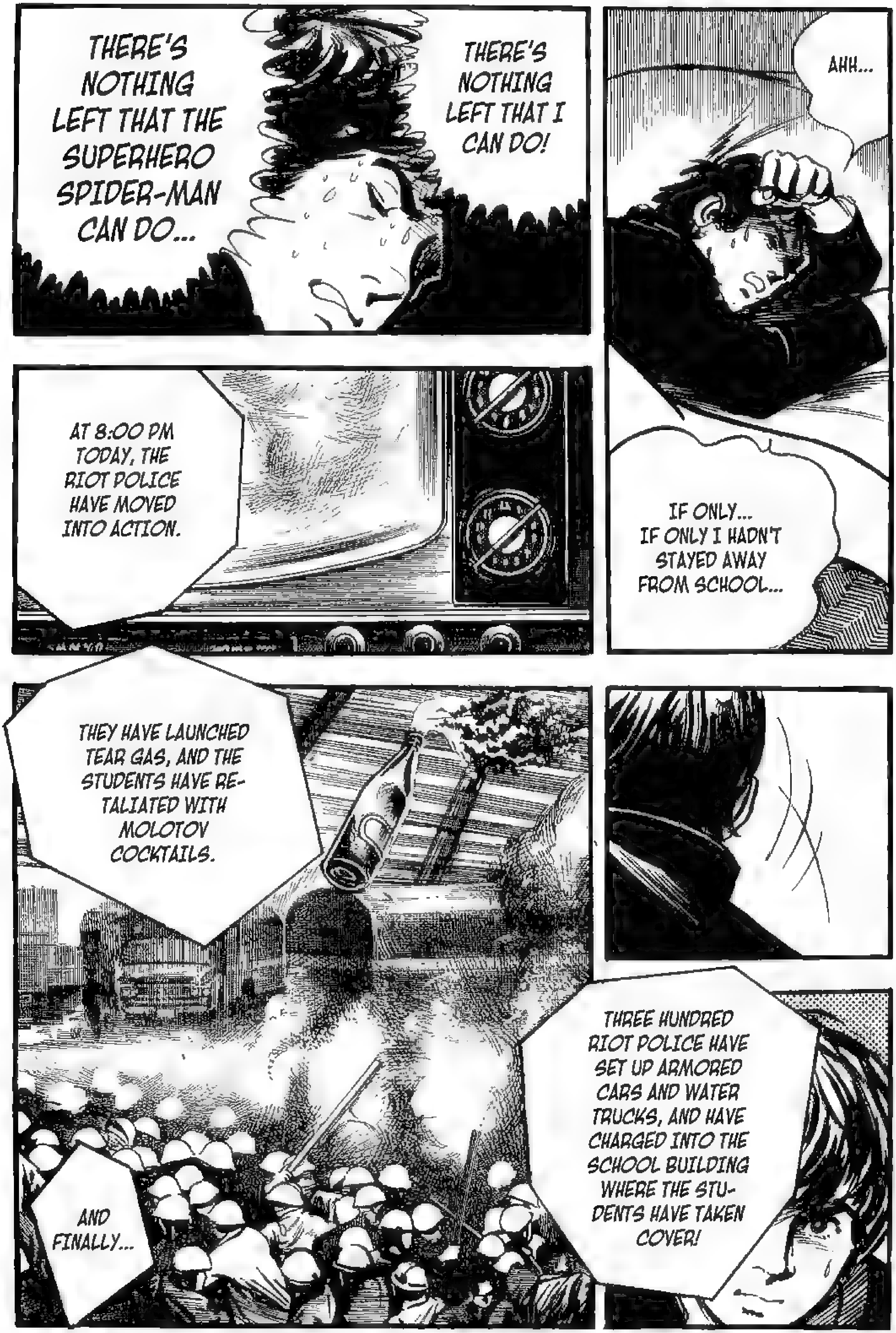
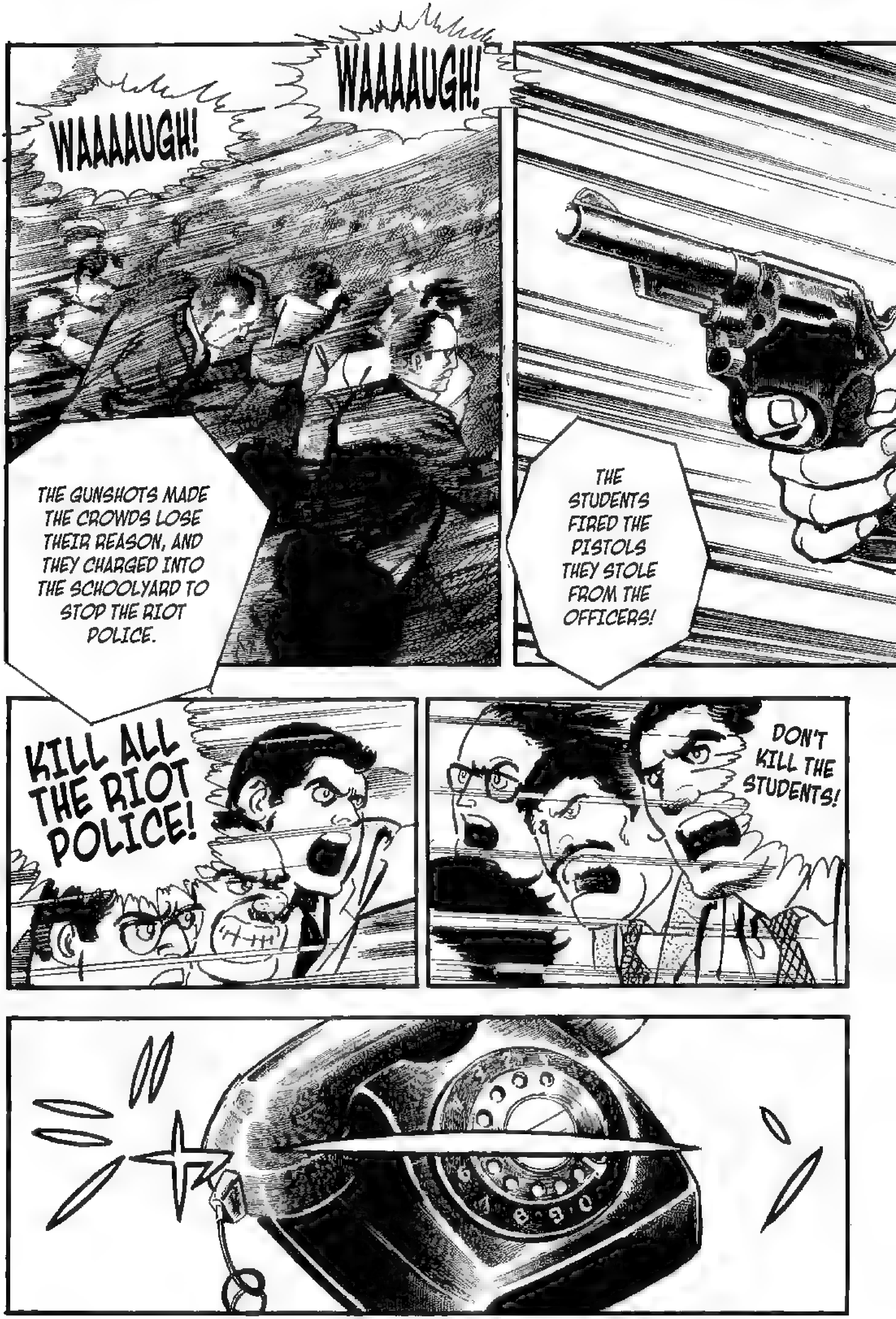

TODAY, AT 11:00AM, FIVE HUNDRED STUDENTS OF OTOWA HIGH SCHOOL IN TOKYO TOOK UP KNIVES AND CLUBS AND STARTED A MAJOR BRAWL.
IT APPEARS SEVERAL HAVE ALREADY DIED...
SANYO
THE OTOWA POLICE STATION RECEIVED WORD, AND SENT THIRTEEN OFFICERS TO STOP THEM.
BUT THEY WERE CAUGHT UP IN THE BRAWL, AND THE STUDENTS STOLE THEIR PISTOLS.
EIGHT OF THE OFFICERS WERE WOUNDED AND CARRIED INTO THE SCHOOL BUILDING BY THE STUDENTS,
AND APPEAR TO BE CONFINED ...

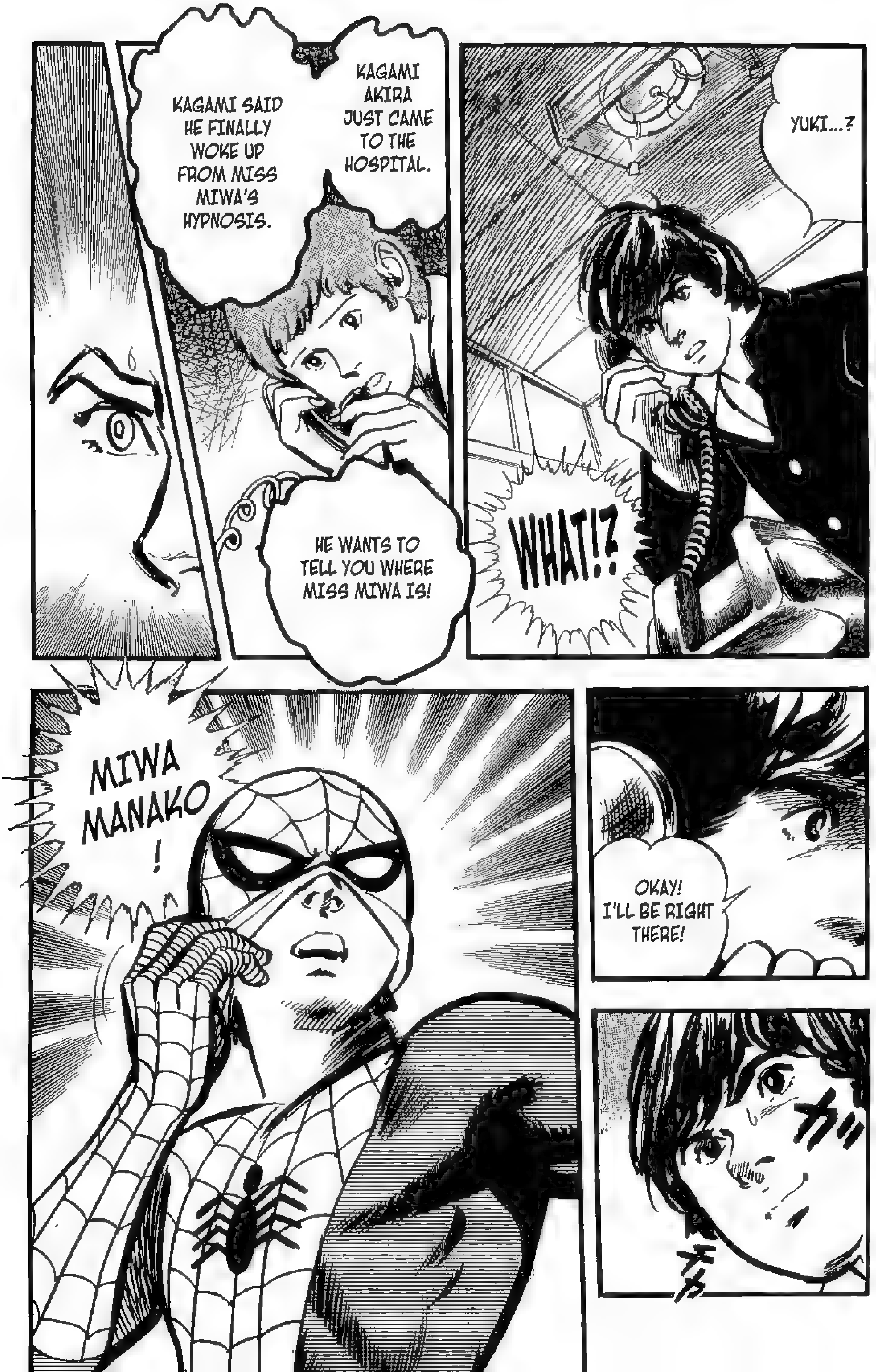

THE BRAWL HAS SETTLED FOR THE MOMENT, AND THE STUDENTS HAVE BUILT UP BARRICADES TO HIDE BEHIND...
NOW THAT THE STUDENTS HAVE THEIR HANDS ON PISTOLS, THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT HAS TAKEN THIS MATTER SERIOUSLY,
AND HAVE MOBILIZED RIOT SQUADS TO SUPPRESS THEM.
THEY HAVE NOT TAKEN ACTION JUST YET FOR CONCERN OF THE HOSTAGES' SAFETY.
HOWEVER, THE AREA SURROUNDING OTOWA HIGH IS CROWDED WITH ONLOOKERS AND PARENTS WORRIED OVER THEIR CHILD'S SAFETY.

THE STUDENTS DO NOT SEEM TO BE RESPONDING TO THEIR PARENTS OR THE RIOT POLICE, AND THERE IS NO TELLING WHEN THE BRAWL WILL BEGIN AGAIN.
WE DO NOT KNOW WHY SUCH A LARGE-SCALE BRAWL HAS BEGUN.
IT IS OF A COMPLETELY DISTINCT NATURE FROM PAST HIGH SCHOOL VIOLENCE, AND HAS NO POLITICAL BACKGROUND...
THE ONLY EXPLANATION IS THAT THE DAILY UNSATISFIED NEEDS CHARACTERISTIC OF YOUTHS EXPLODED AT ONCE...
BUT THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT INCIDENTS OF MALE STUDENTS AT OTOWA HIGH ASSAULTING FEMALE STUDENTS.


NO! YOU'RE WRONG!
...BUT THEN AGAIN...
NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE THAT THIS MEANINGLESS VIOLENCE...
WAS CAUSED BY A WITCH!
THE TRUTH WILL BE BURIED, AND THE MEDIA WILL KEEP PERFORMING THIS RACKET!


THERE'S NOTHING LEFT THAT THE SUPERHERO SPIDER-MAN CAN DO...
THERE'S NOTHING LEFT THAT I CAN DO!
AHH...
AT 8:00 PM TODAY, THE RIOT POLICE HAVE MOVED INTO ACTION.
IF ONLY... IF ONLY I HADN'T STAYED AWAY FROM SCHOOL...
THEY HAVE LAUNCHED TEAR GAS, AND THE STUDENTS HAVE RETALIATED WITH MOLOTOV COCKTAILS.
THREE HUNDRED RIOT POLICE HAVE SET UP ARMORED CARS AND WATER TRUCKS, AND HAVE CHARGED INTO THE SCHOOL BUILDING WHERE THE STUDENTS HAVE TAKEN COVER!
AND FINALLY...


WAAAAUGH!
WAAAAUGH!
THE STUDENTS FIRED THE PISTOLS THEY STOLE FROM THE OFFICERS!
THE GUNSHOTS MADE THE CROWDS LOSE THEIR REASON, AND THEY CHARGED INTO THE SCHOOLYARD TO STOP THE RIOT POLICE.
DON'T KILL THE STUDENTS!
KILL ALL THE RIOT POLICE!


YUKI...?
KAGAMI AKIRA JUST CAME TO THE HOSPITAL.
KAGAMI SAID HE FINALLY WOKE UP FROM MISS MIWA'S HYPNOSIS.
HE WANTS TO TELL YOU WHERE MISS MIWA IS!
WHAT!?
OKAY! I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!
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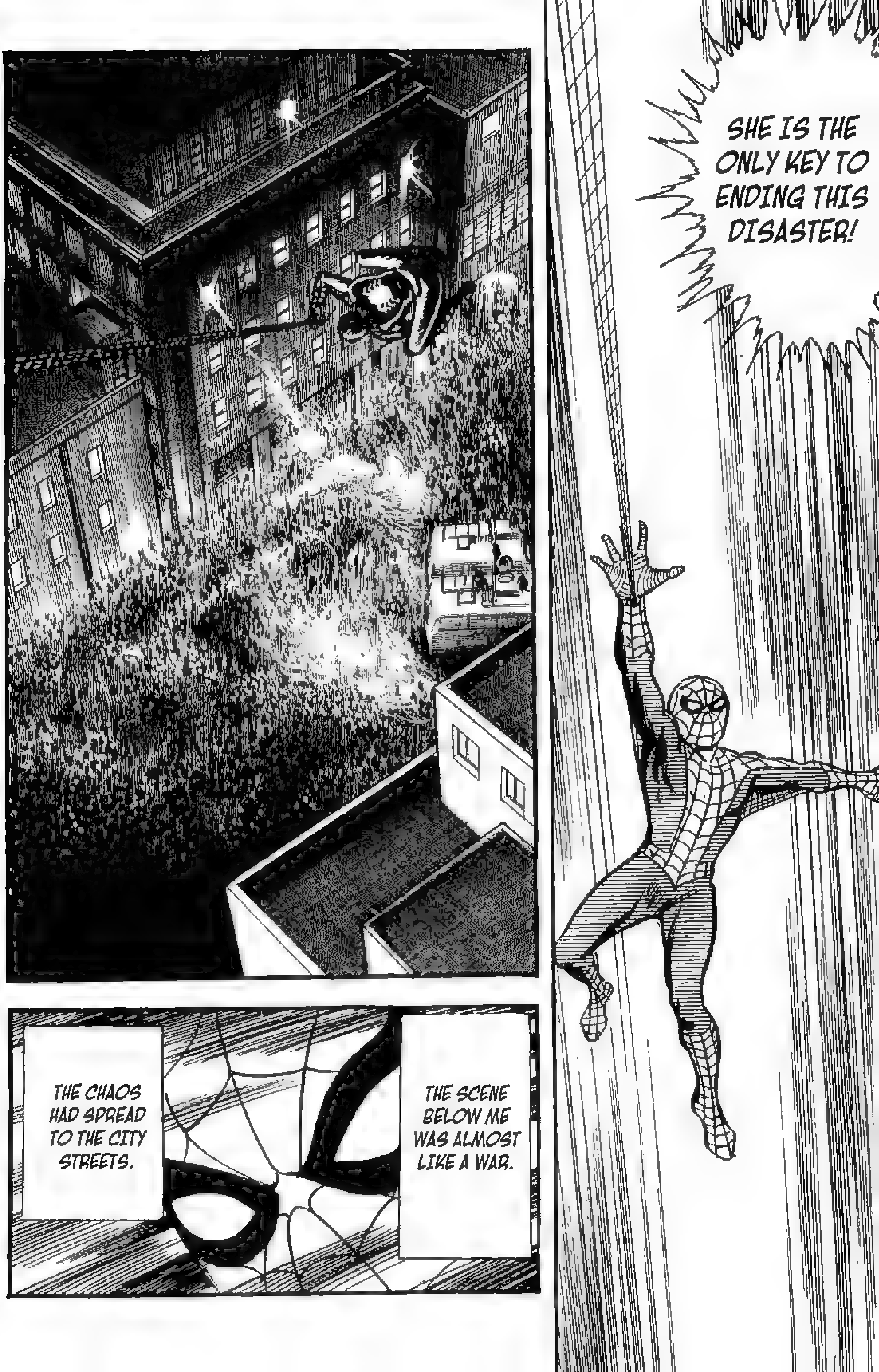
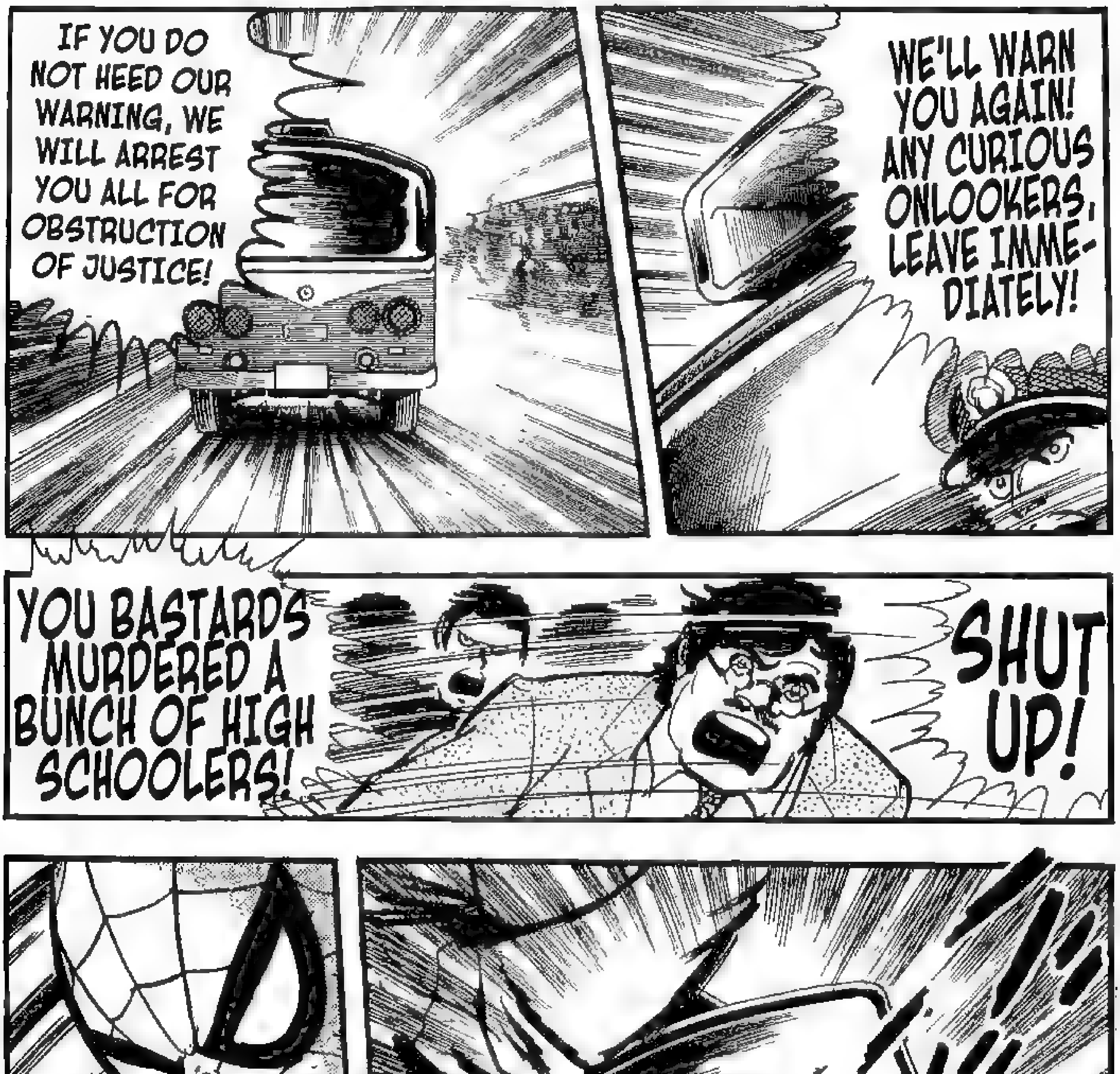
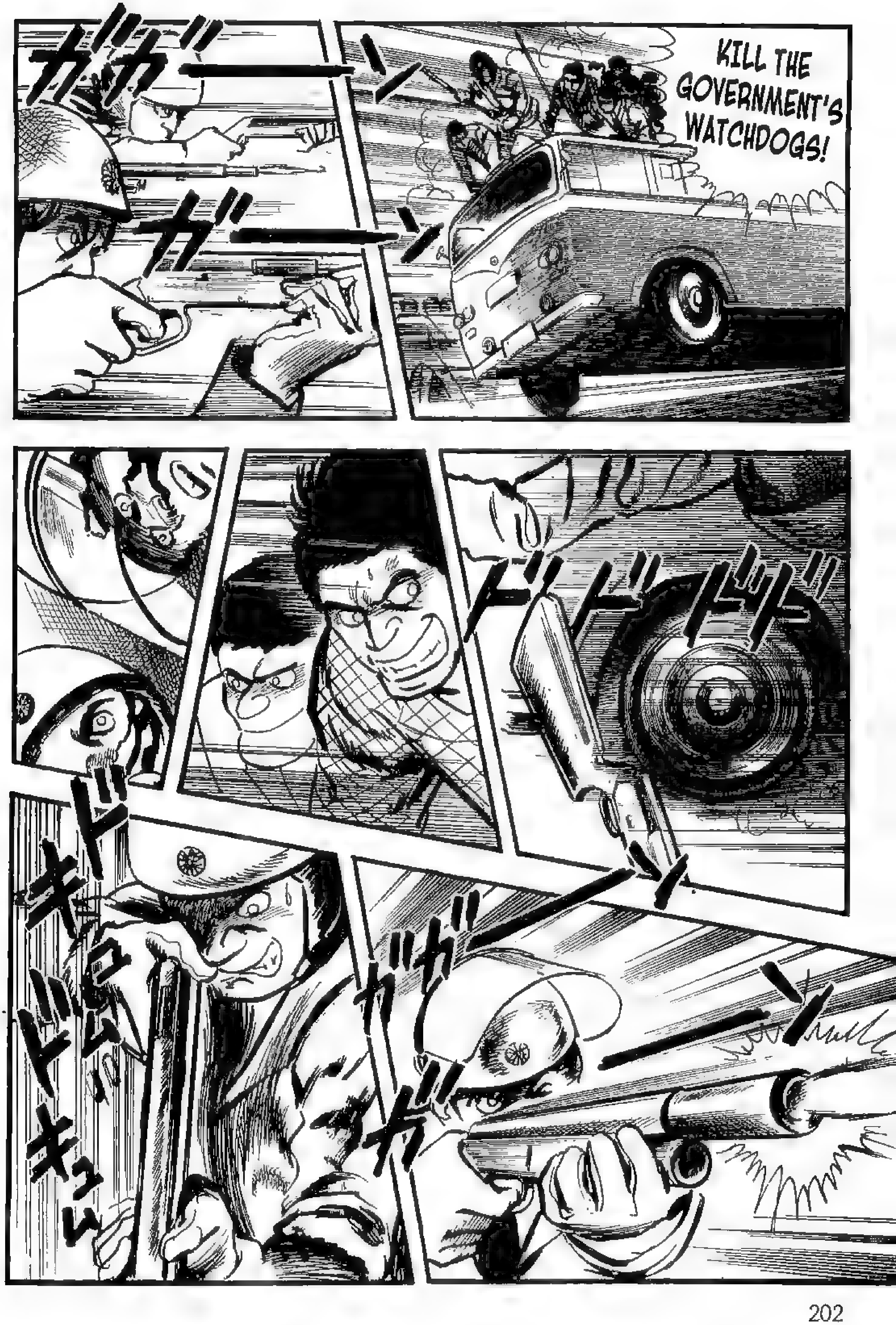
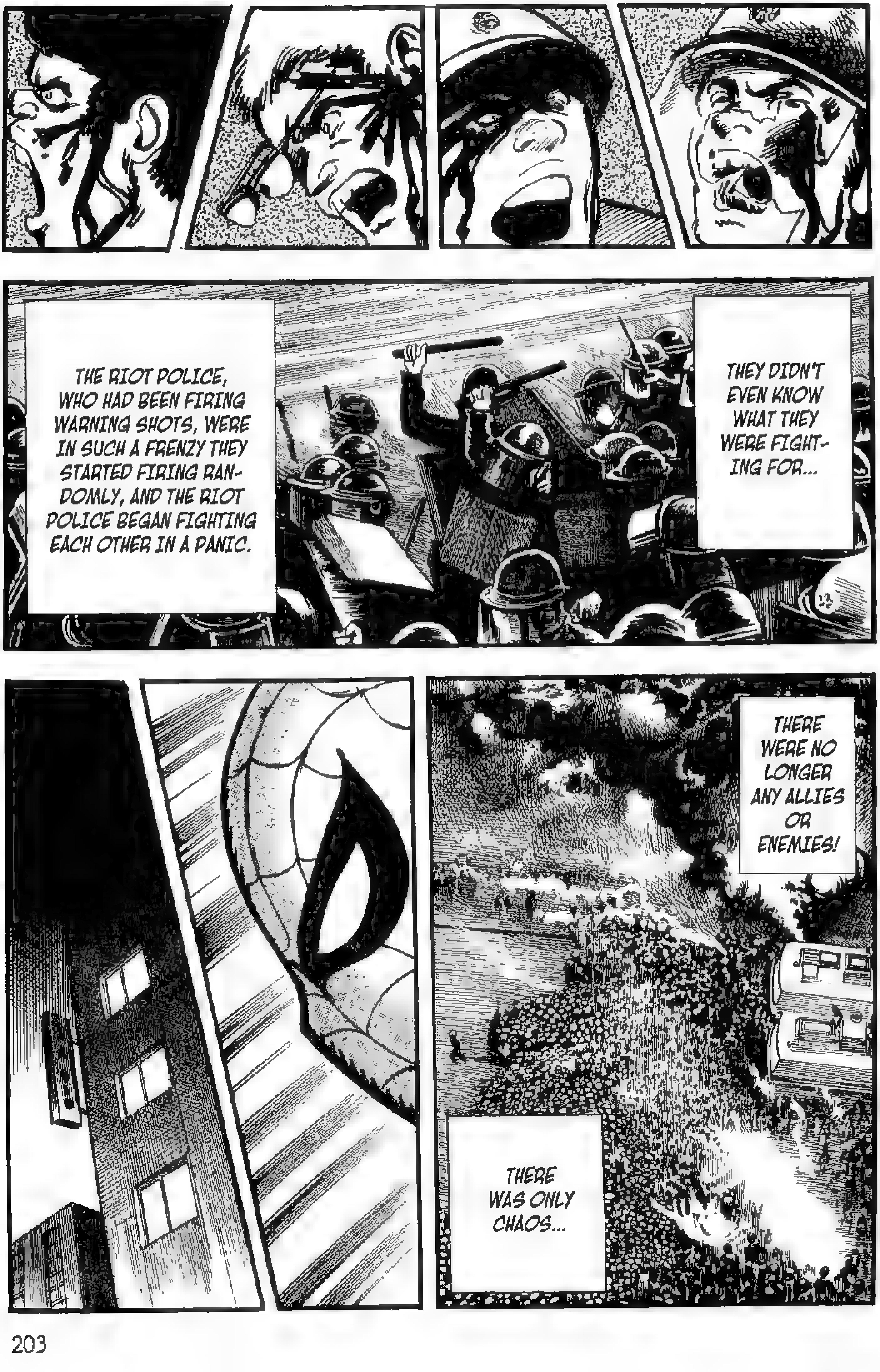
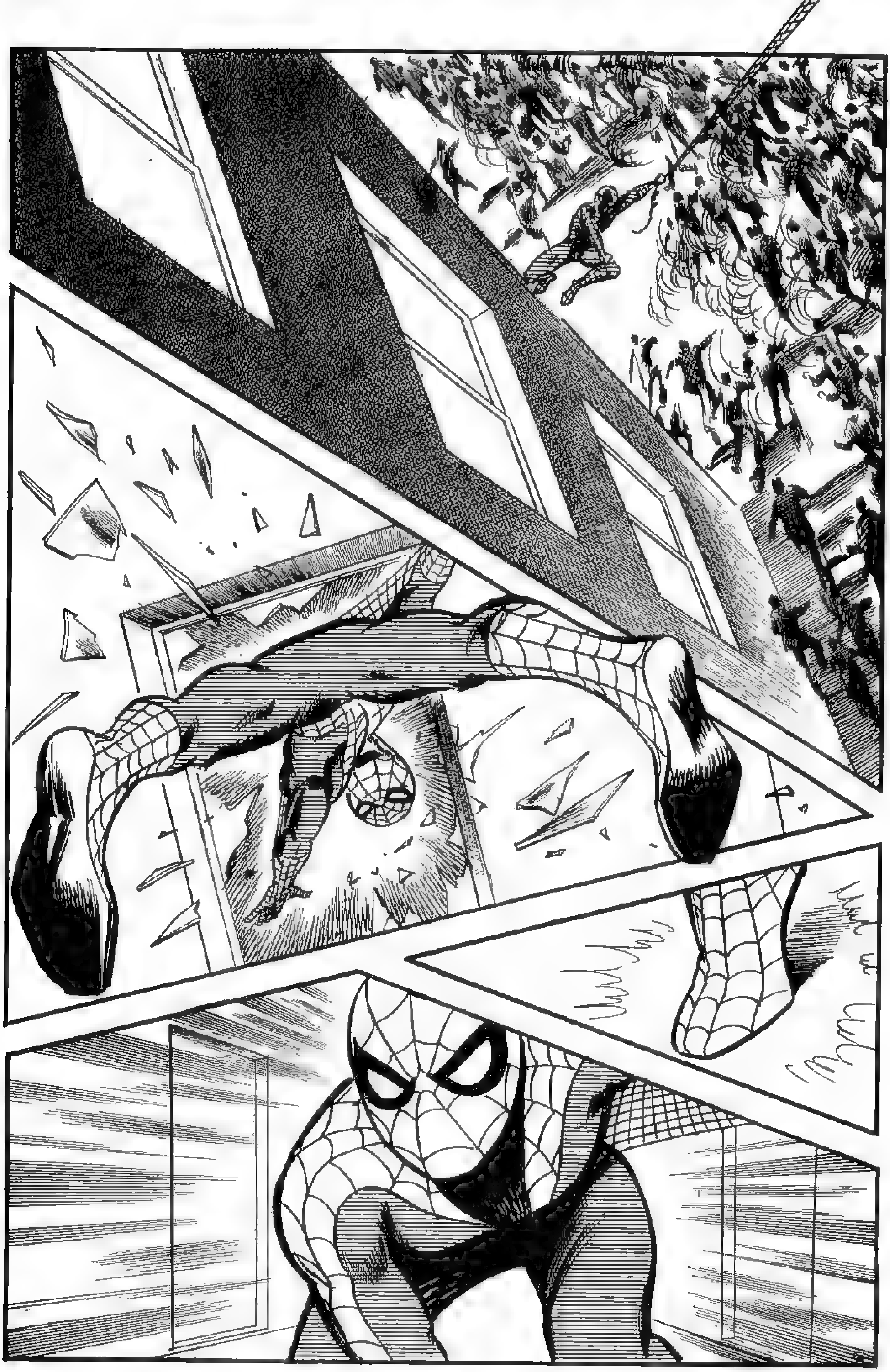
MIWA MANAKO!

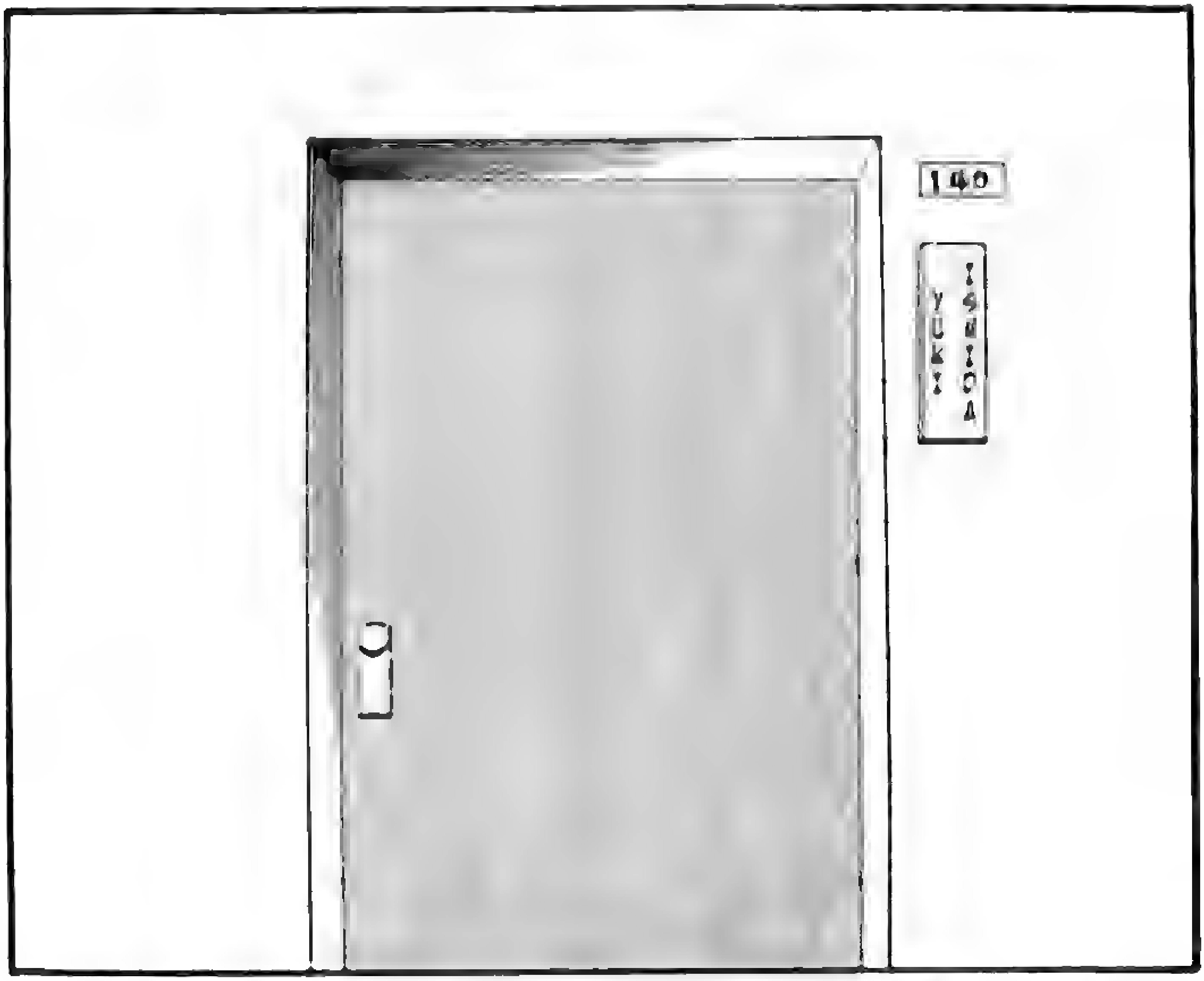

SHE IS THE ONLY KEY TO ENDING THIS DISASTER!
THE SCENE BELOW ME WAS ALMOST LIKE A WAR.
THE CHAOS HAD SPREAD TO THE CITY STREETS.


IF YOU DO NOT HEED OUR WARNING, WE WILL ARREST YOU ALL FOR OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE!
WE'LL WARN YOU AGAIN! ANY CURIOUS ONLOOKERS, LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!
YOU BASTARDS MURDERED A BUNCH OF HIGH SCHOOLERS!
SHUT UP!
!!


KILL THE GOVERNMENT'S WATCHDOGS!


THE RIOT POLICE, WHO HAD BEEN FIRING WARNING SHOTS, WERE IN SUCH A FRENZY THEY STARTED FIRING RANDOMLY, AND THE RIOT POLICE BEGAN FIGHTING EACH OTHER IN A PANIC.
THEY DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT THEY WERE FIGHTING FOR...
THERE WERE NO LONGER ANY ALLIES OR ENEMIES!
THERE WAS ONLY CHAOS...

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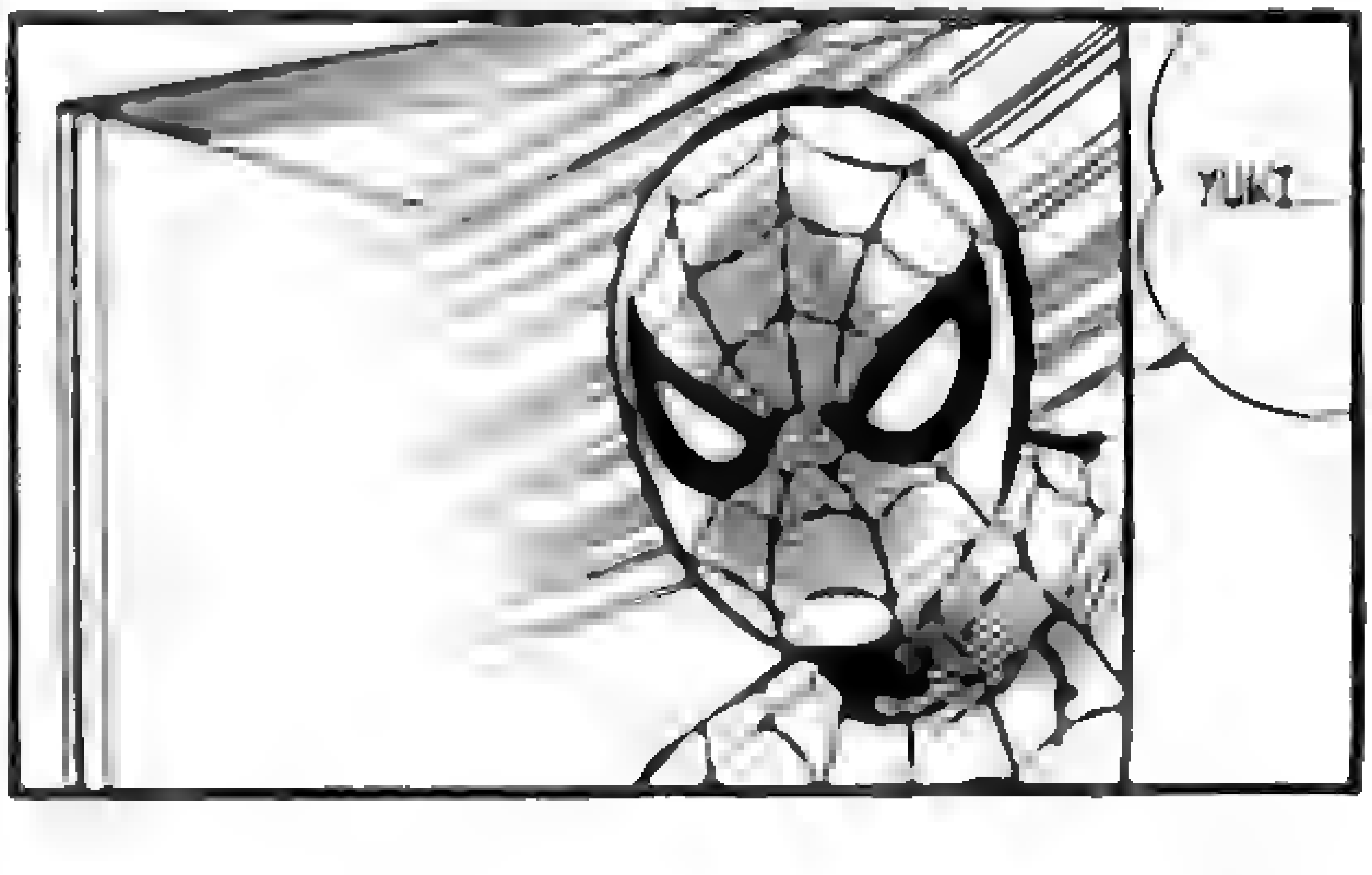
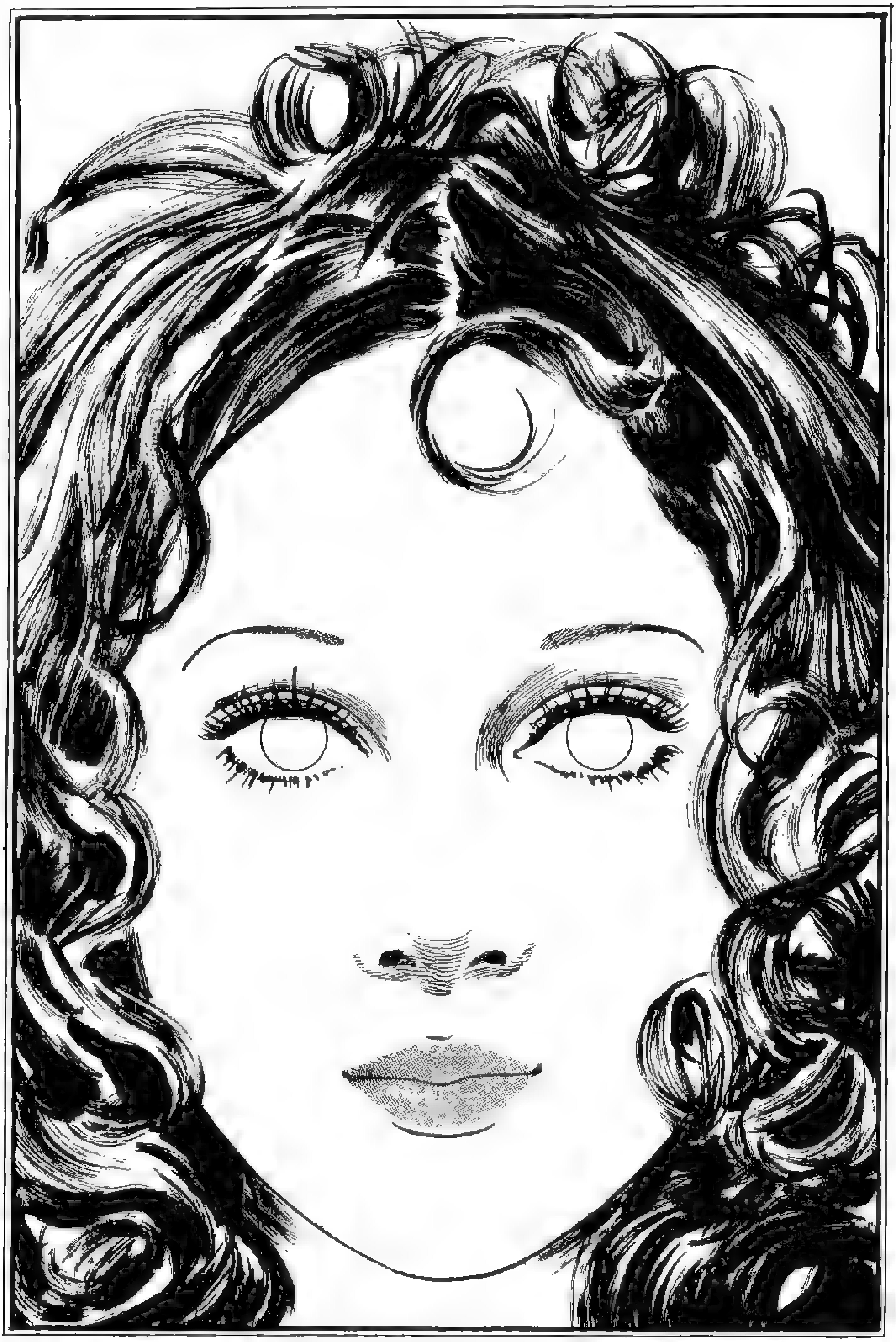
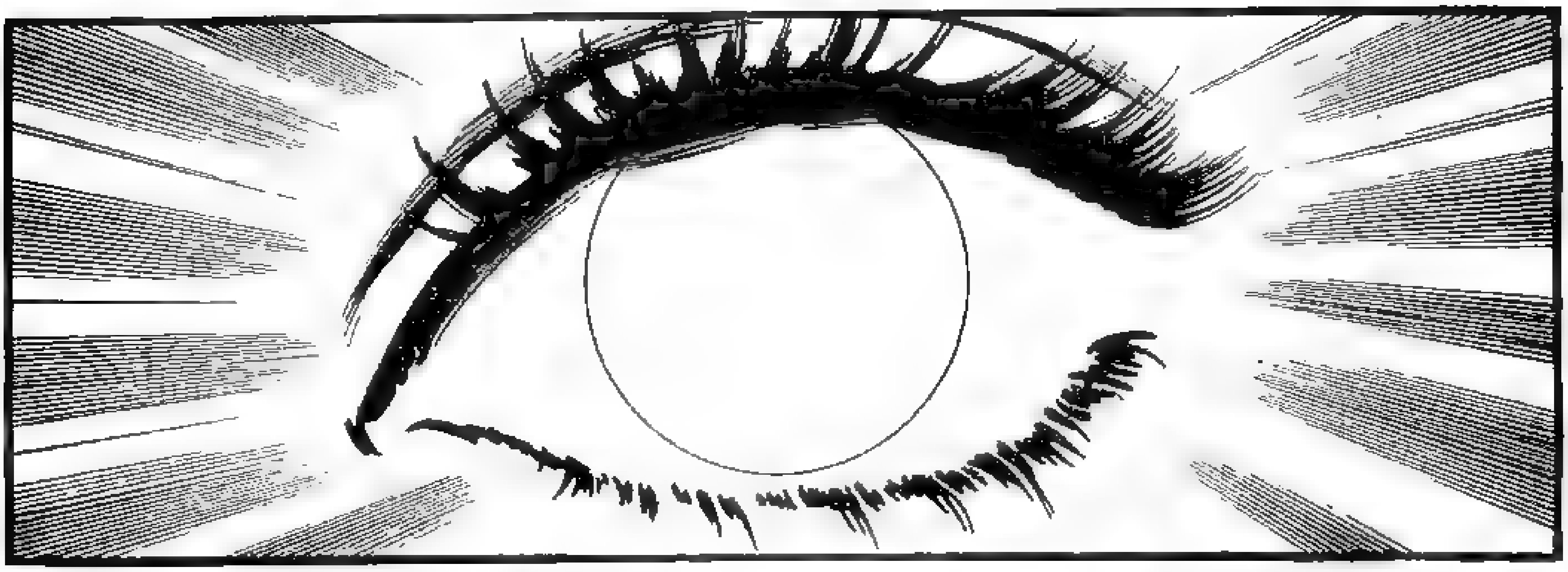
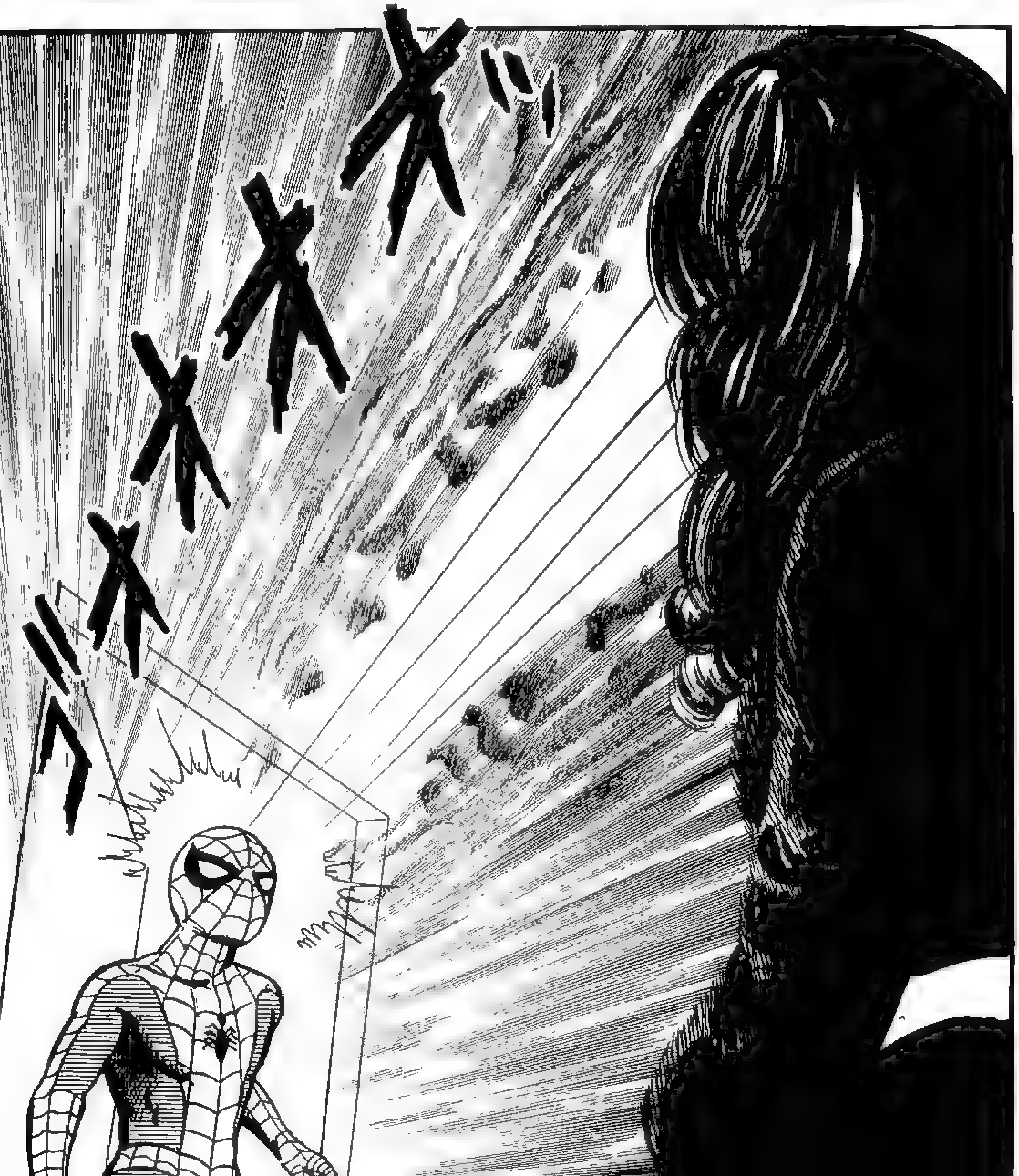

YUKI...



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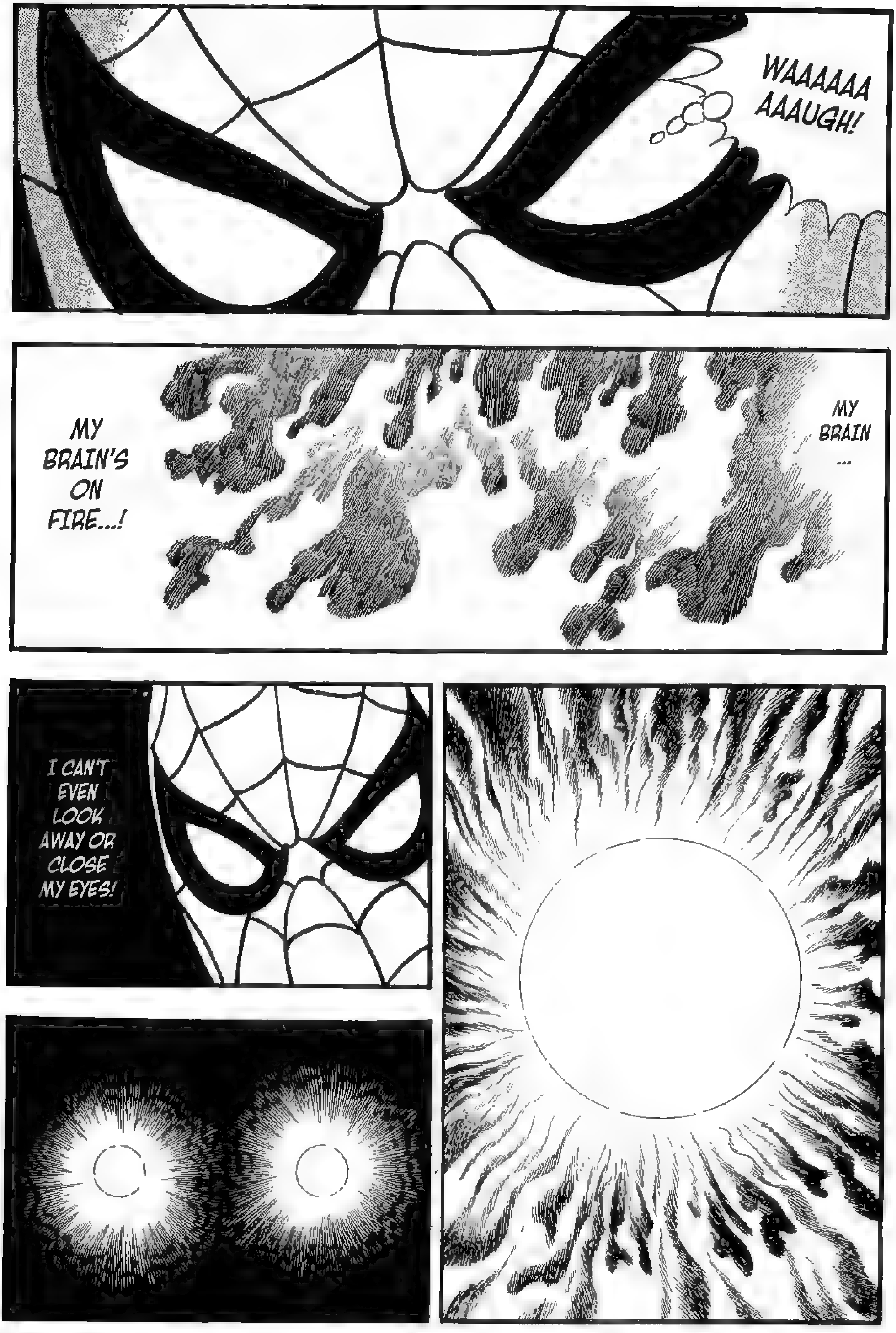
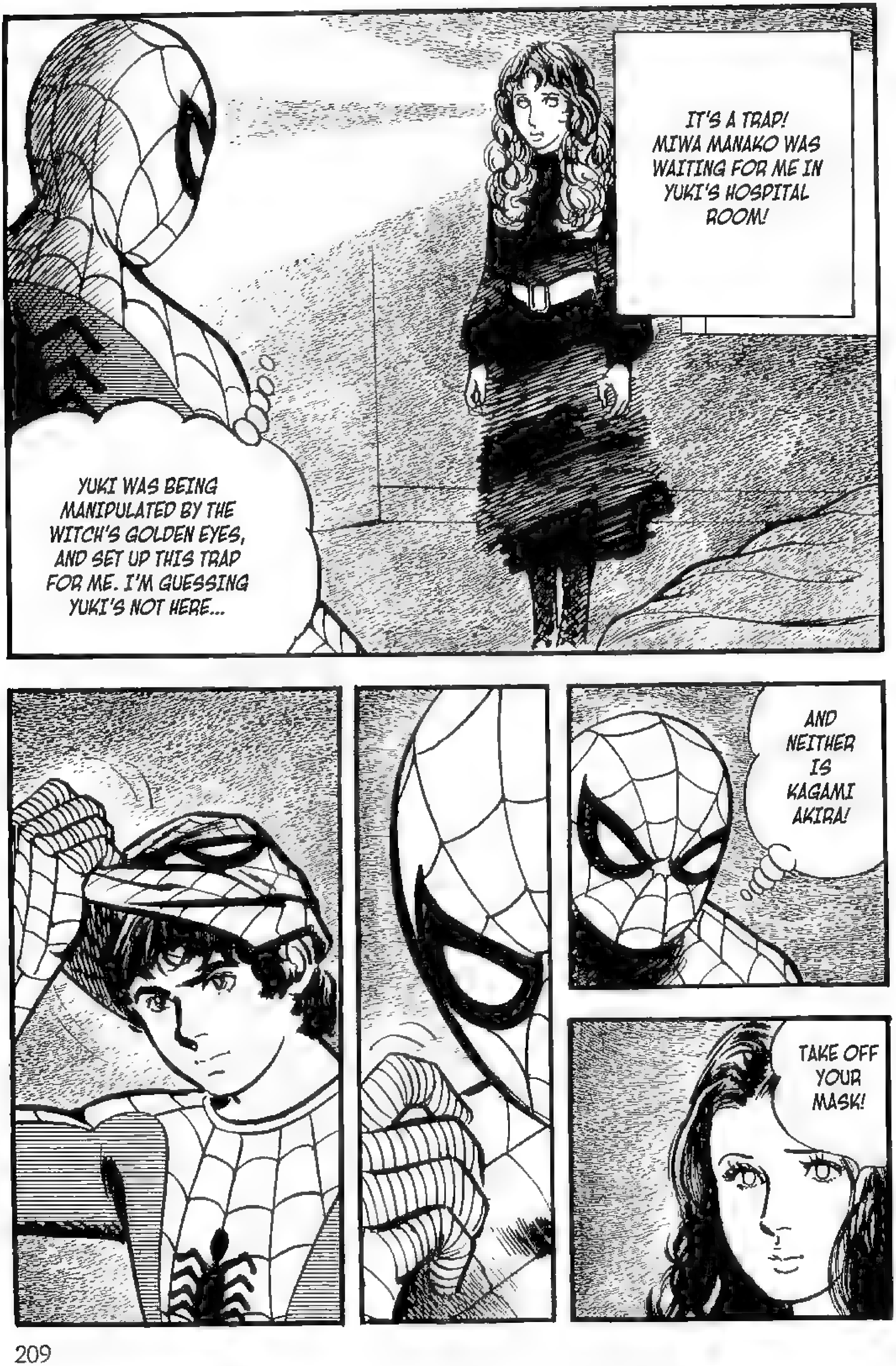
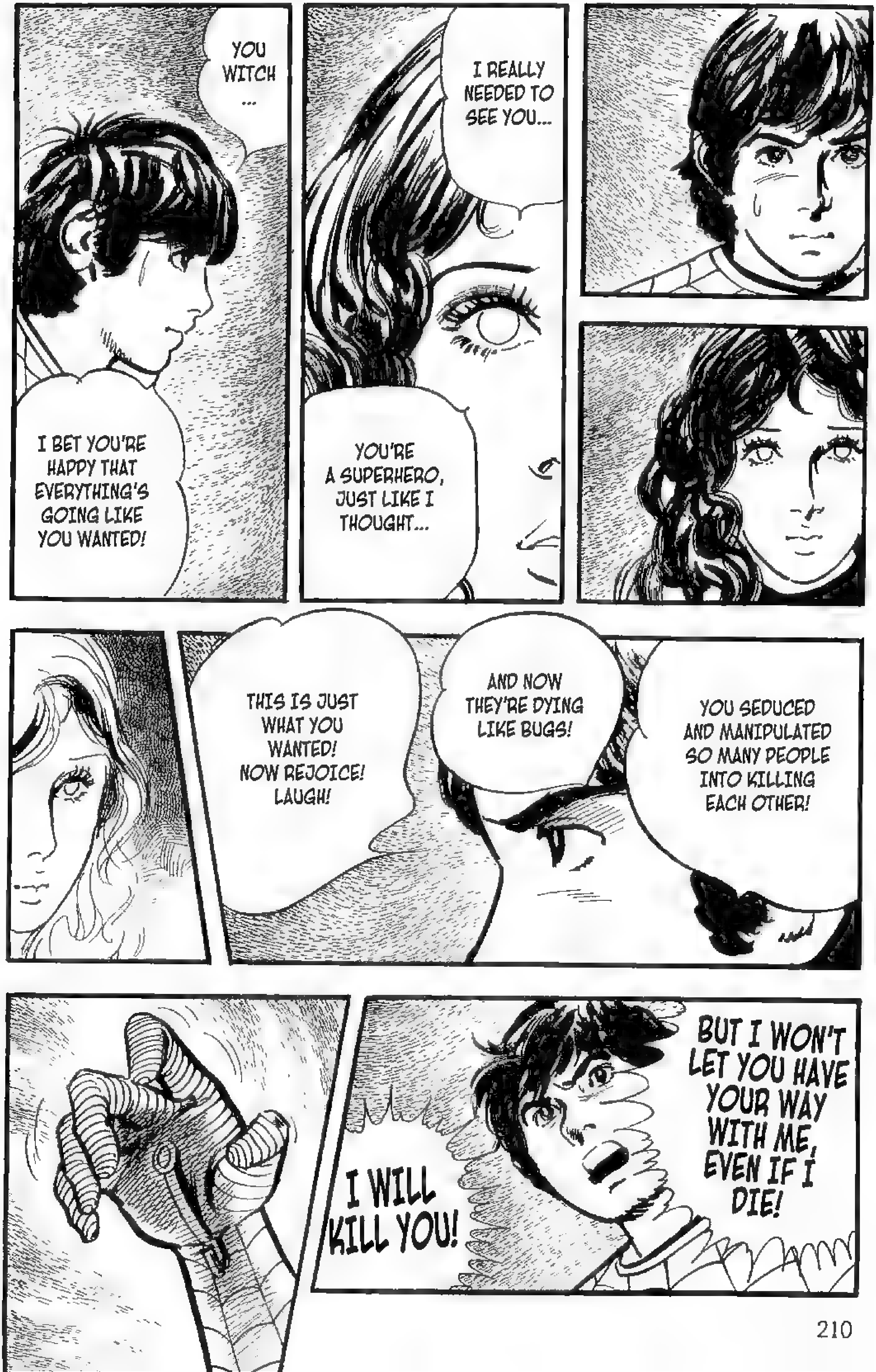
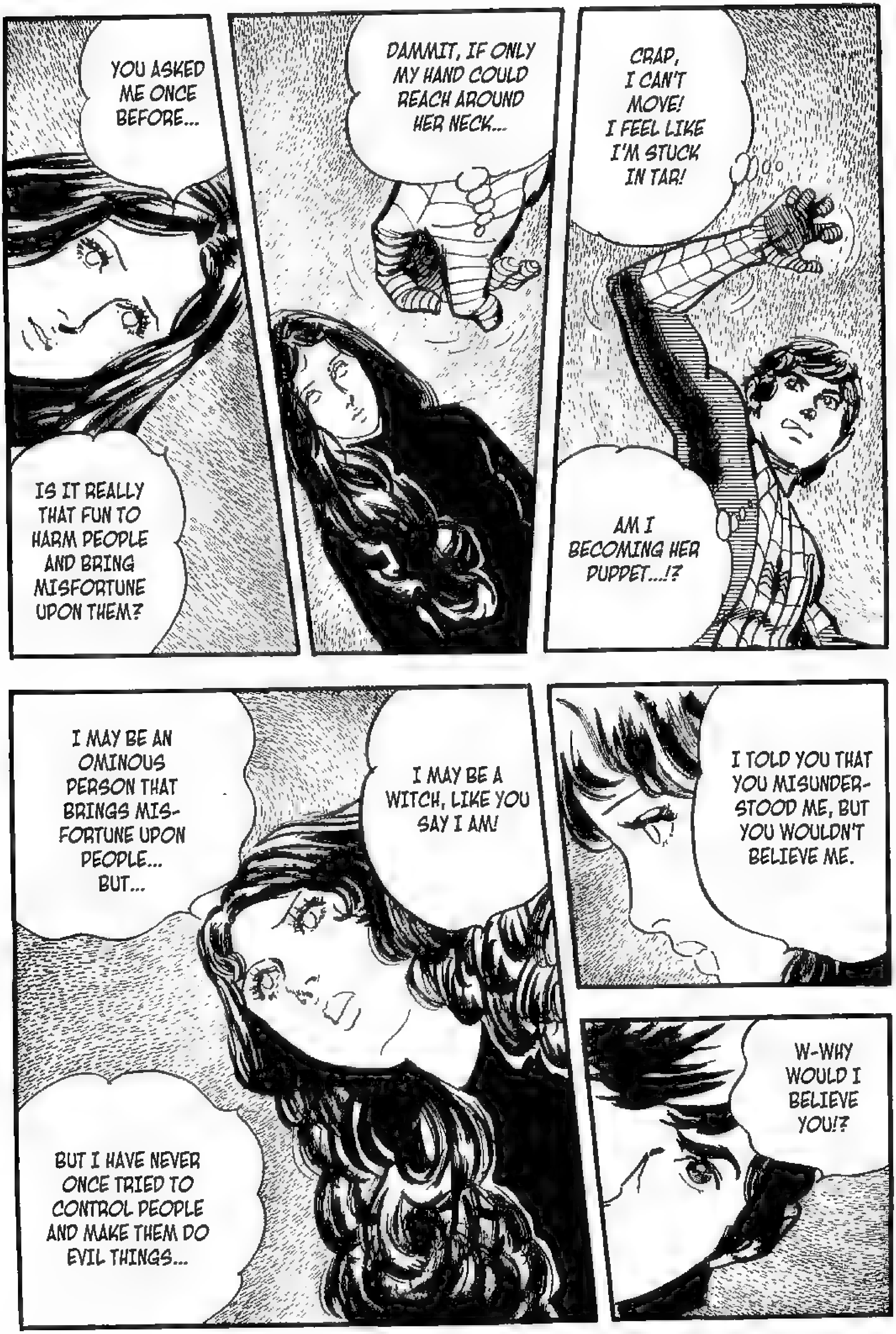
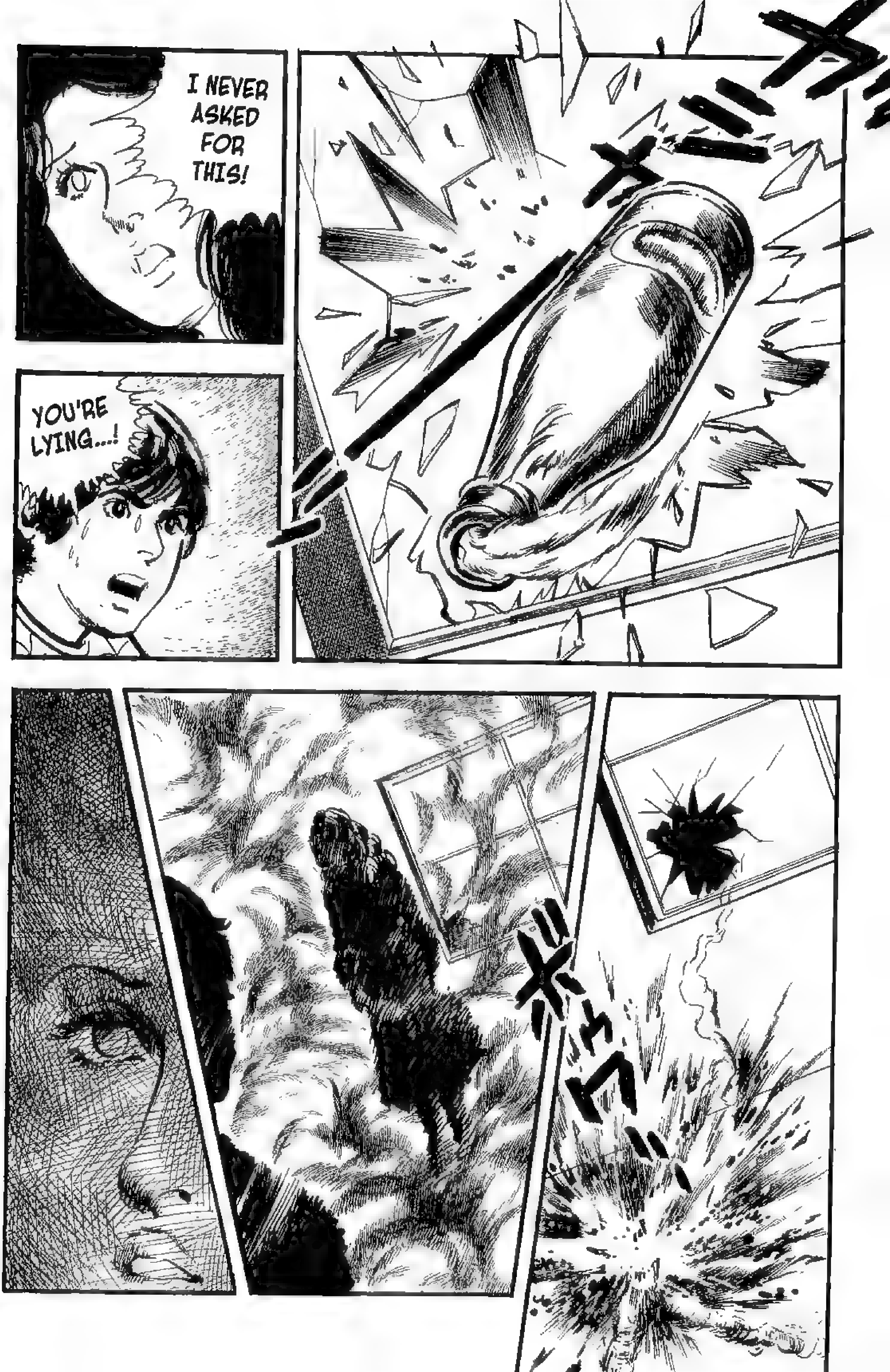
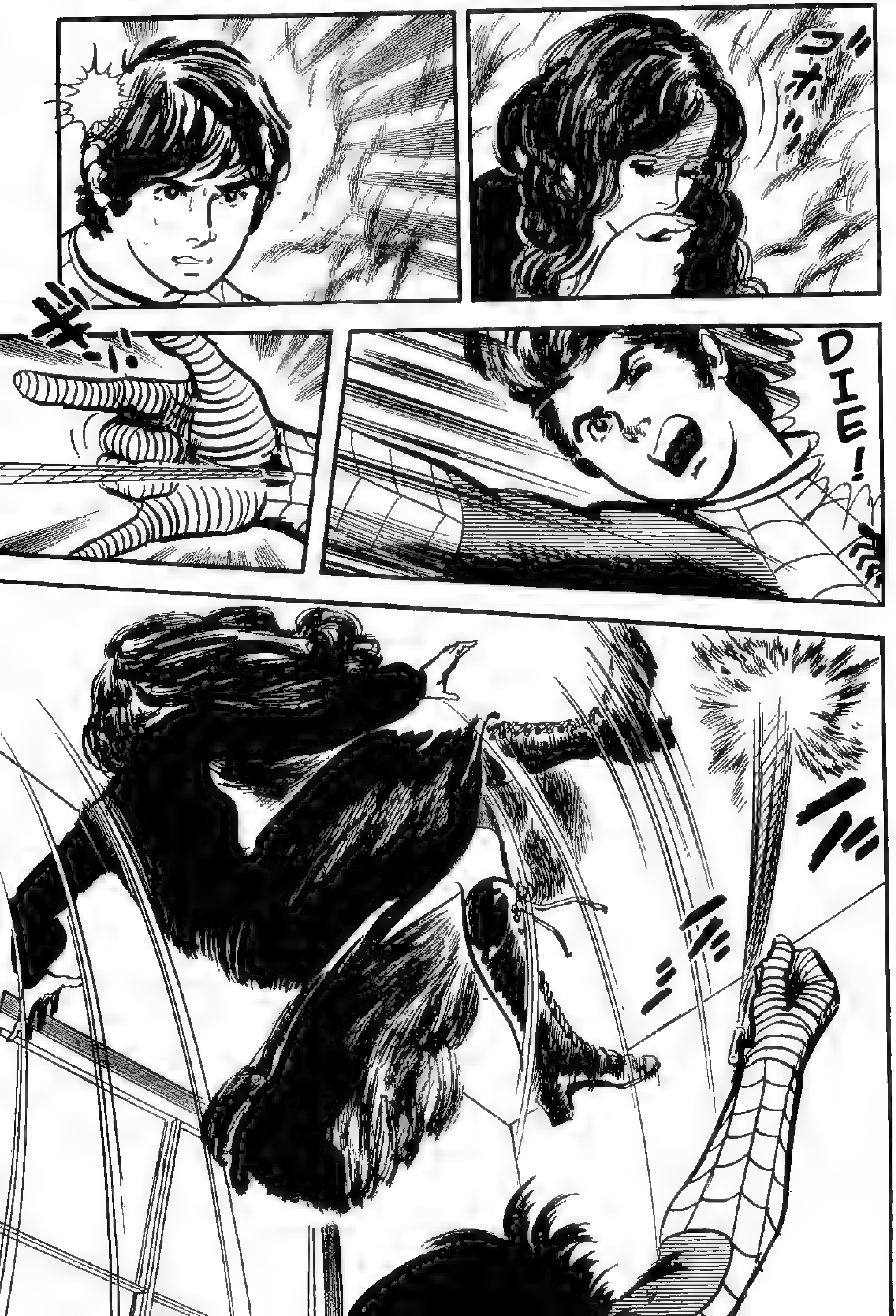

WAAAAAA AAAUGH!
MY BRAIN'S ON FIRE...!
MY BRAIN ...
I CAN'T EVEN LOOK AWAY OR CLOSE MY EYES!


IT'S A TRAP! MIWA MANAKO WAS WAITING FOR ME IN YUKI'S HOSPITAL ROOM!
YUKI WAS BEING MANIPULATED BY THE WITCH'S GOLDEN EYES, AND SET UP THIS TRAP FOR ME. I'M GUESSING YUKI'S NOT HERE...
AND NEITHER IS KAGAMI AKIRA!
TAKE OFF YOUR MASK!


YOU WITCH ...
I BET YOU'RE HAPPY THAT EVERYTHING'S GOING LIKE YOU WANTED!
I REALLY NEEDED TO SEE YOU...
YOU'RE A SUPERHERO, JUST LIKE I THOUGHT...
YOU SEDUCED AND MANIPULATED SO MANY PEOPLE INTO KILLING EACH OTHER!
AND NOW THEY'RE DYING LIKE BUGS!
THIS IS JUST WHAT YOU WANTED! NOW REJOICE! LAUGH!
BUT I WON'T LET YOU HAVE YOUR WAY WITH ME, EVEN IF I DIE!
I WILL KILL YOU!


YOU ASKED ME ONCE BEFORE...
IS IT REALLY THAT FUN TO HARM PEOPLE AND BRING MISFORTUNE UPON THEM?
DAMMIT, IF ONLY MY HAND COULD REACH AROUND HER NECK...
CRAP, I CAN'T MOVE! I FEEL LIKE I'M STUCK IN TAR!
AM I BECOMING HER PUPPET...!?
I MAY BE AN OMINOUS PERSON THAT BRINGS MISFORTUNE UPON PEOPLE... BUT...
I MAY BE A WITCH, LIKE YOU SAY I AM!
BUT I HAVE NEVER ONCE TRIED TO CONTROL PEOPLE AND MAKE THEM DO EVIL THINGS...
I TOLD YOU THAT YOU MISUNDERSTOOD ME, BUT YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME.
W-WHY WOULD I BELIEVE YOU!?


I NEVER ASKED FOR THIS!
YOU'RE LYING...!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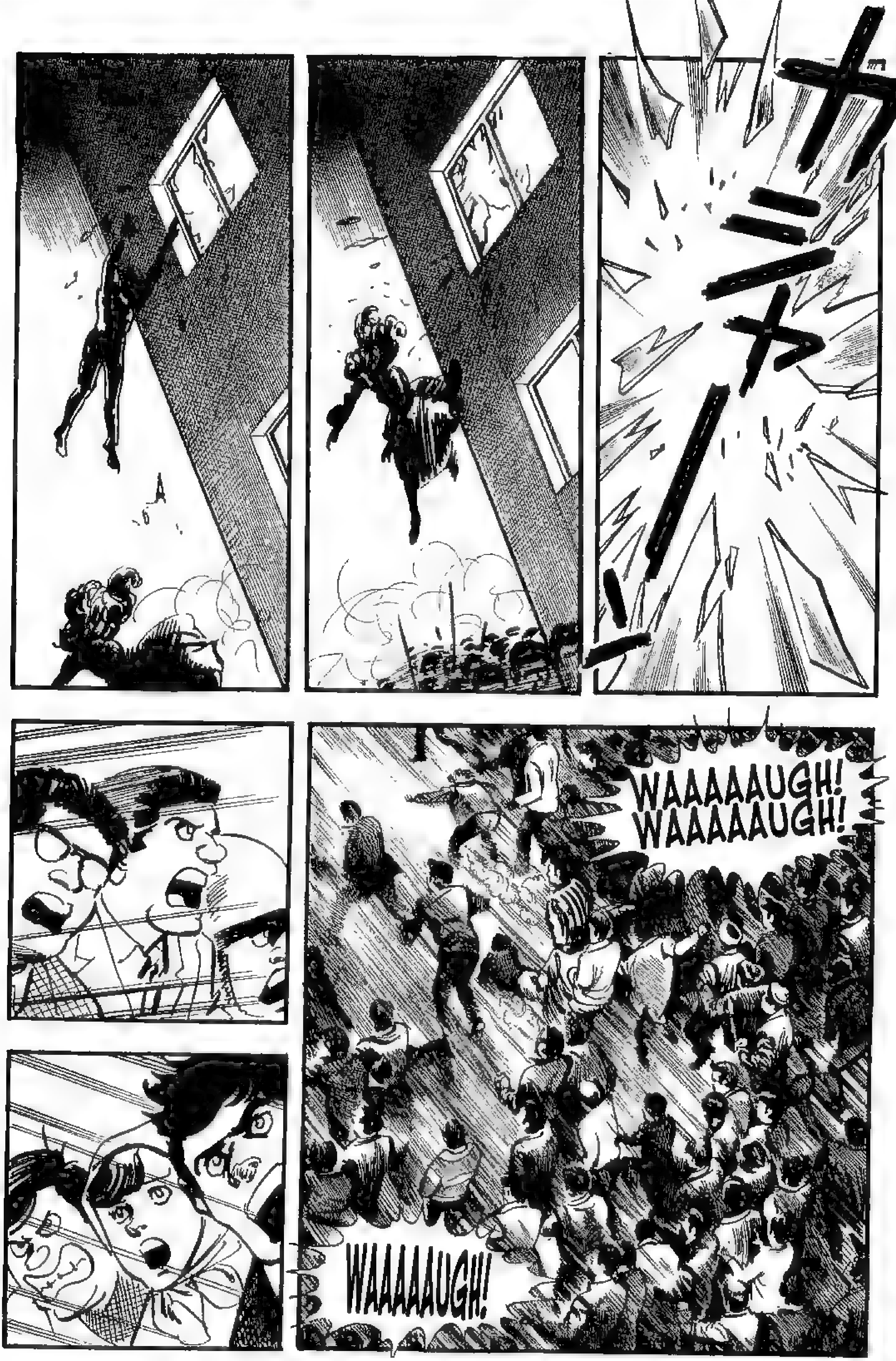
ギ…!!
DIE!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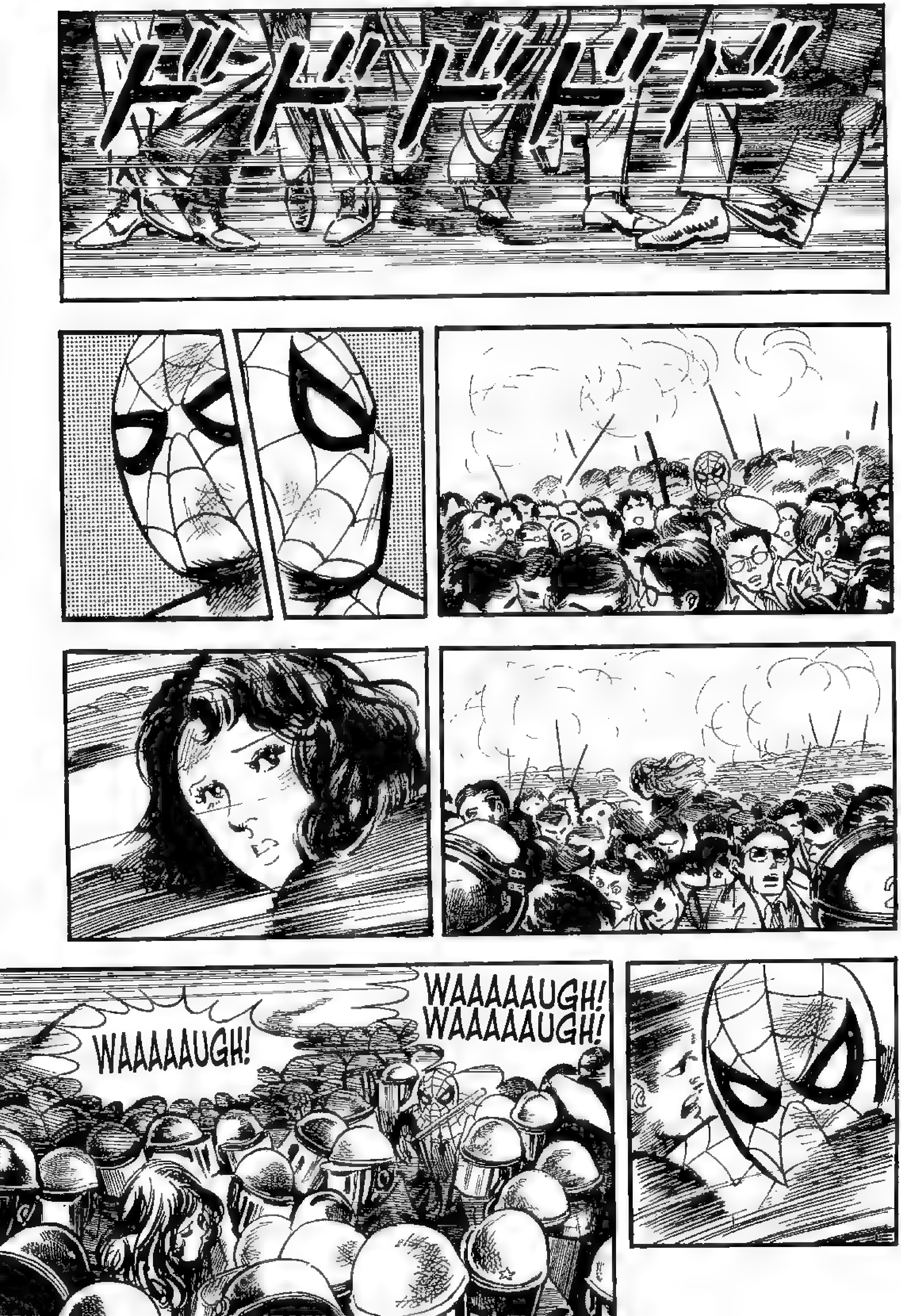
WAAAAAUGH!
WAAAAAUGH!
WAAAAAUGH!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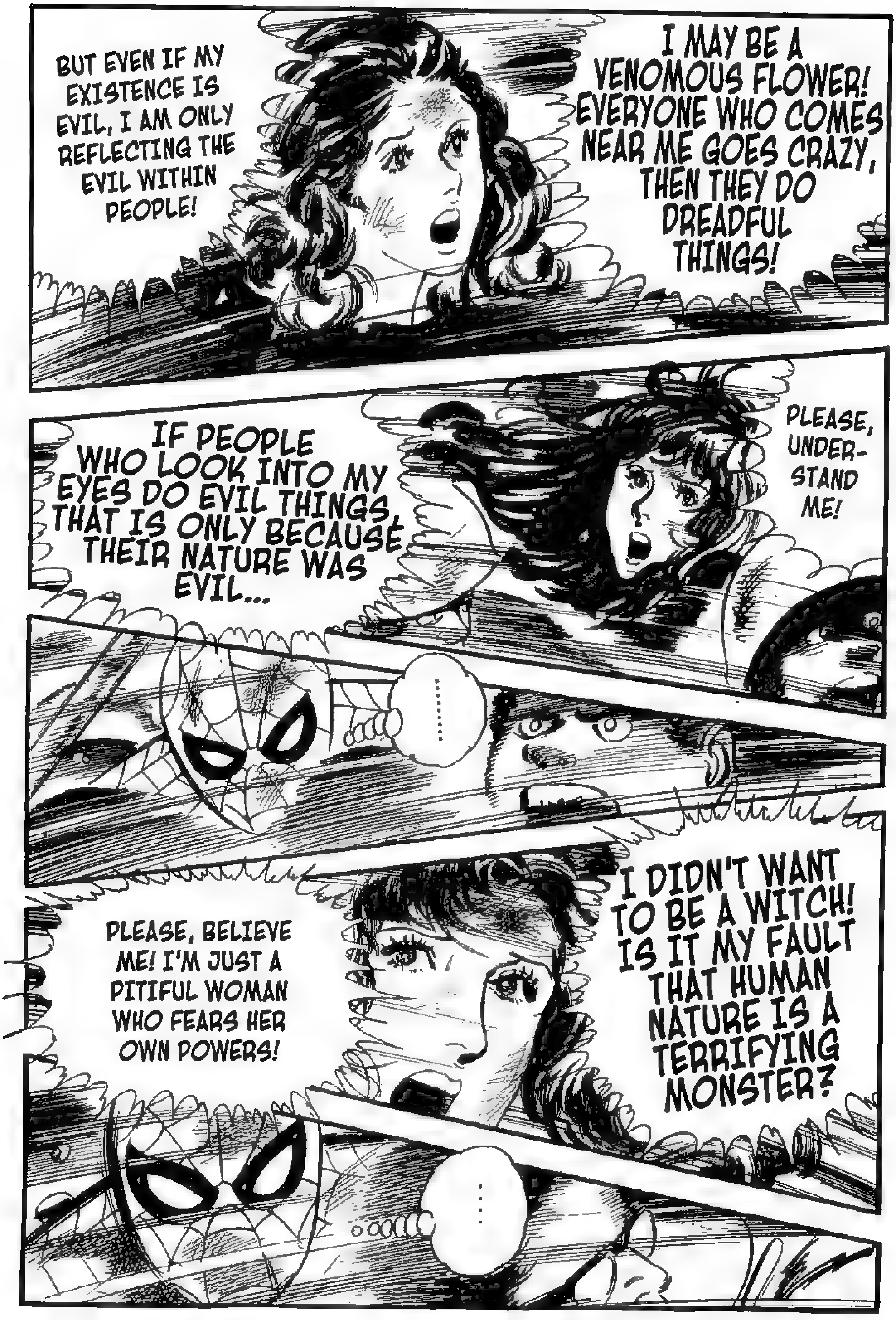
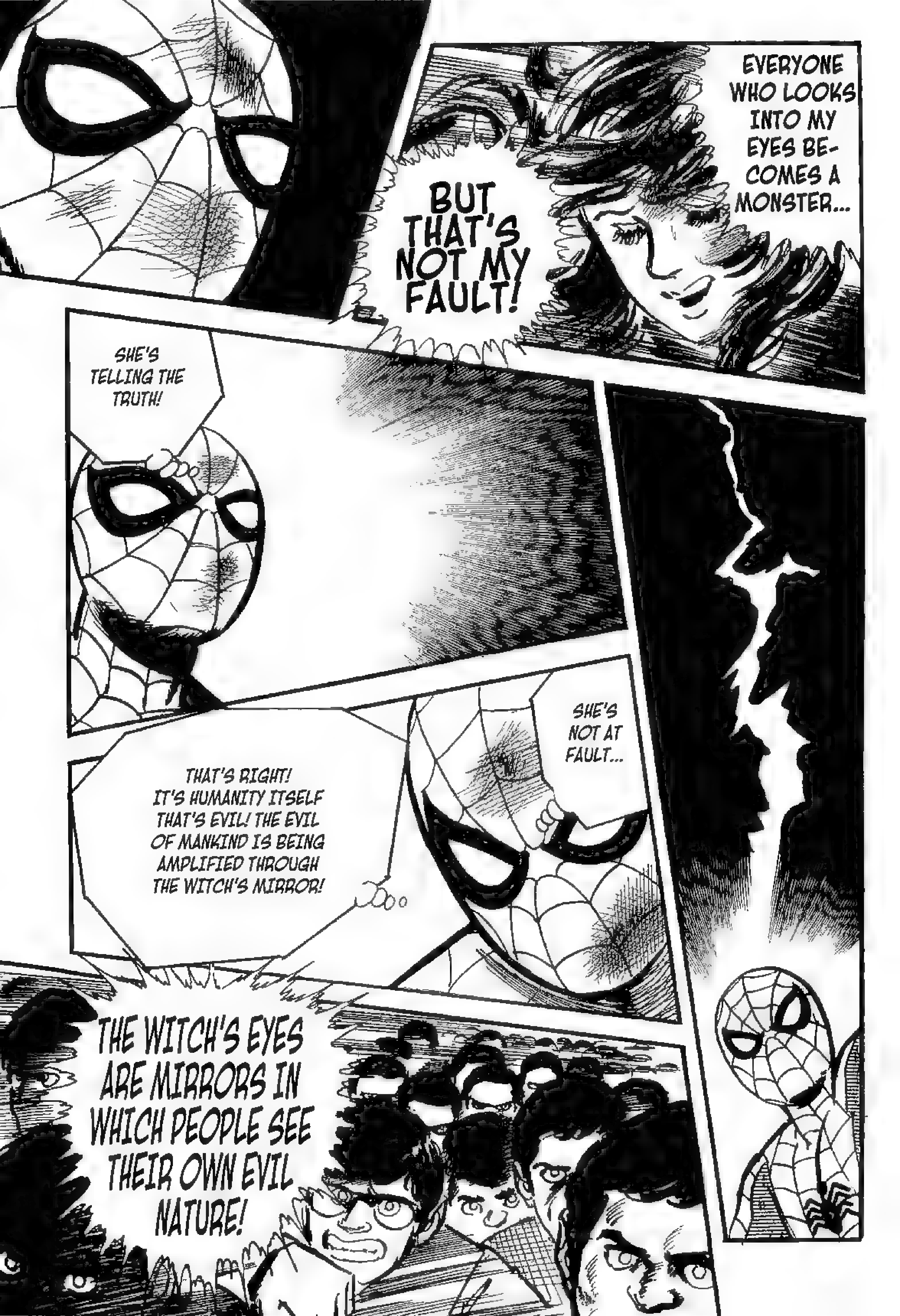
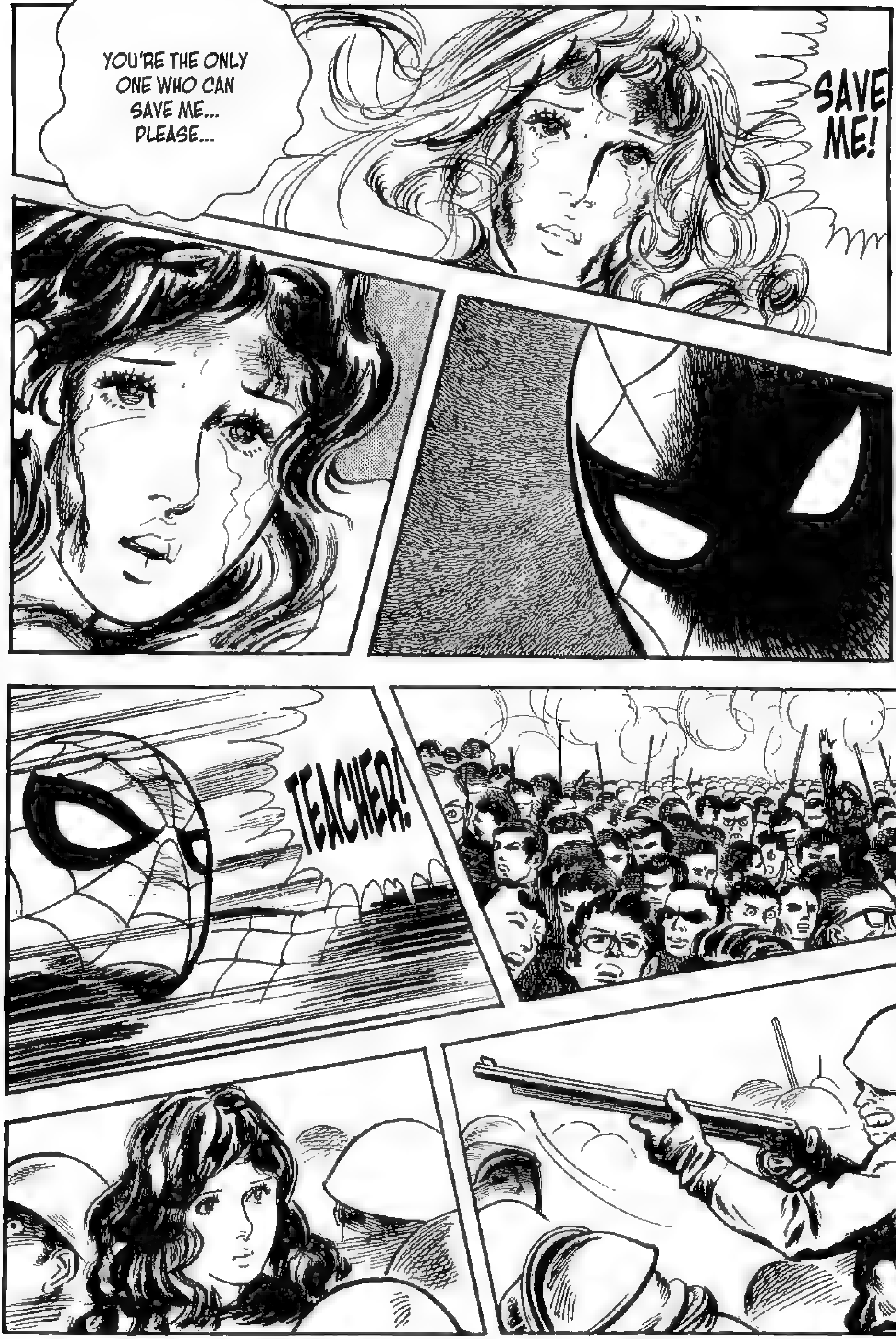
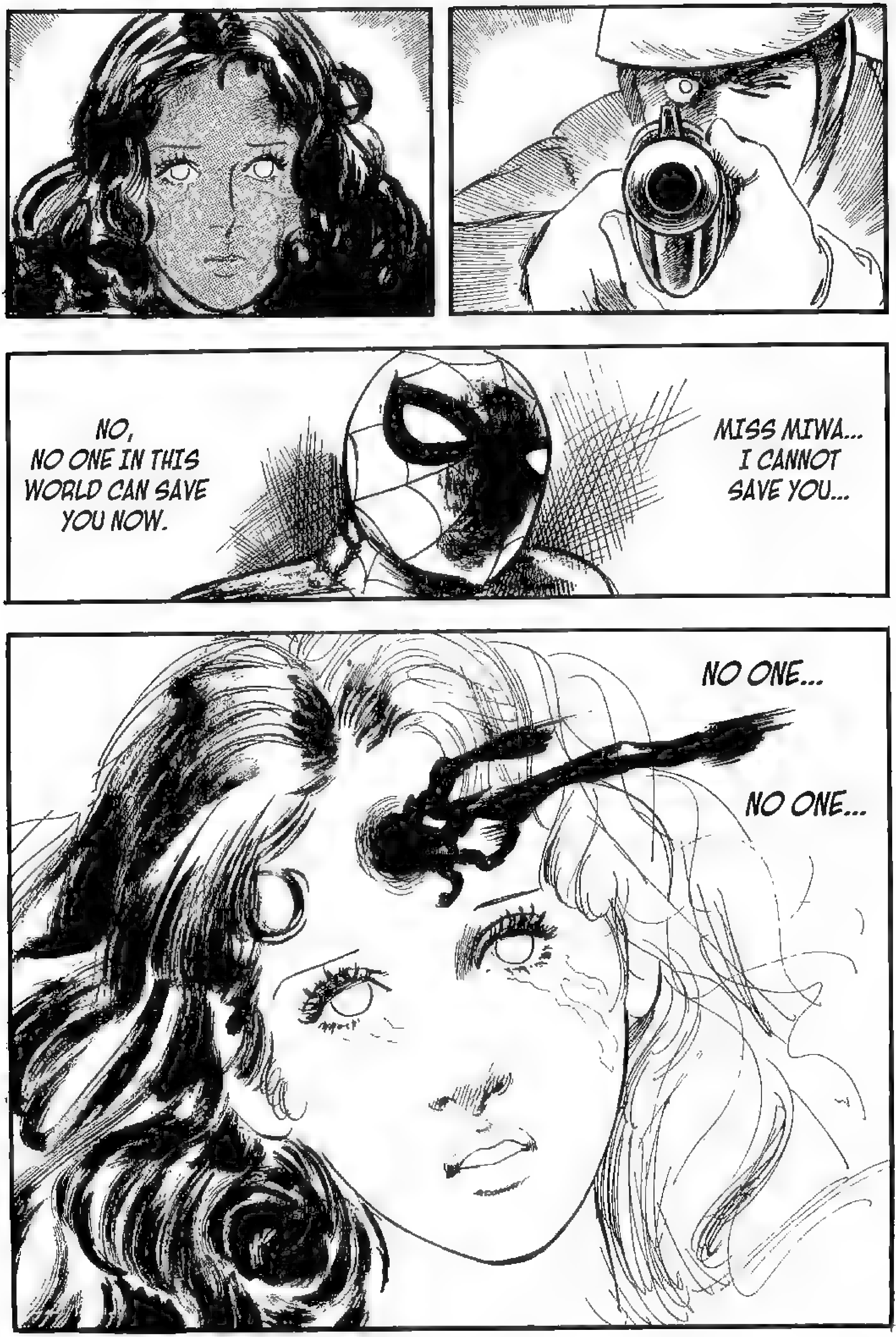
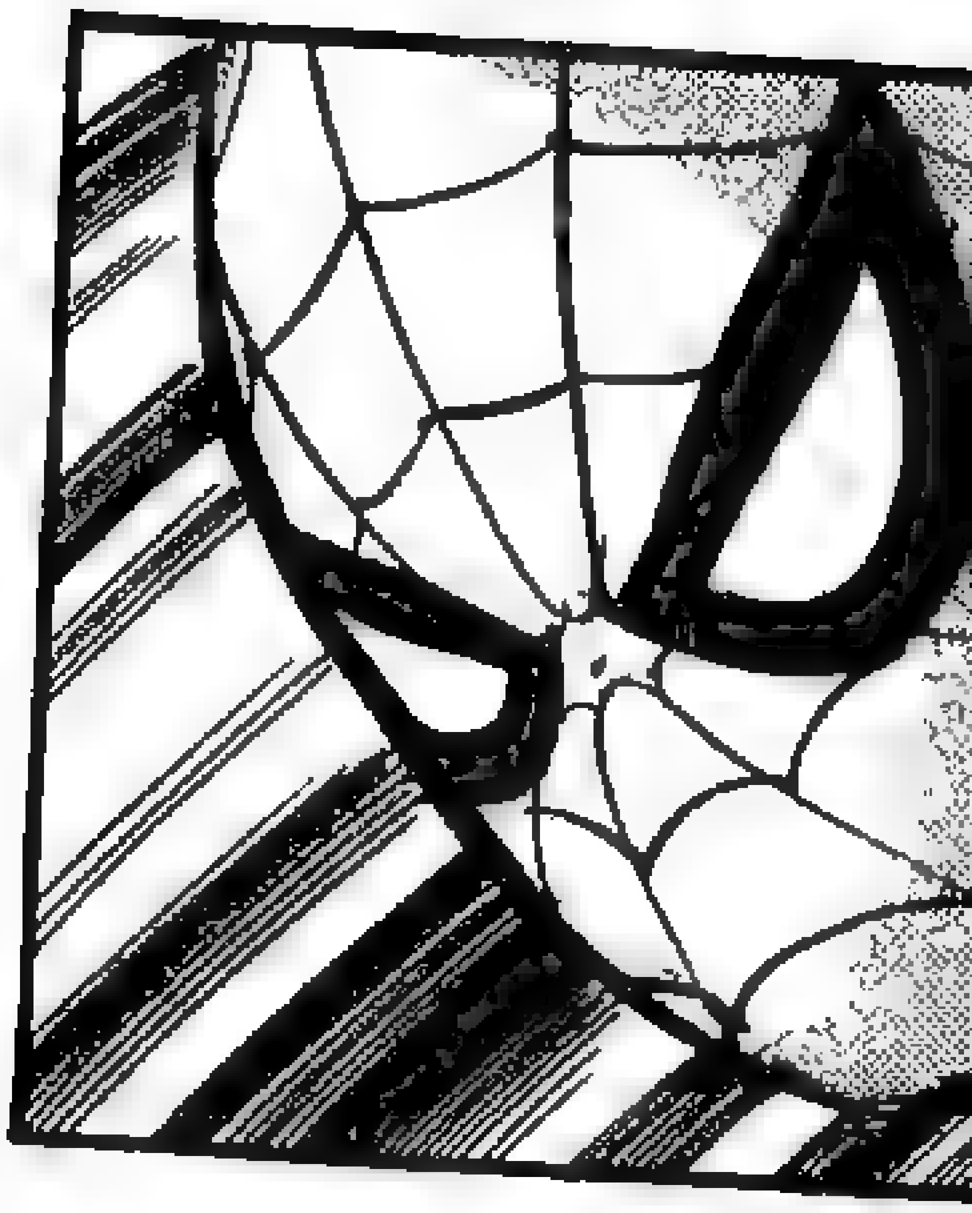

I MAY BE A VENOMOUS FLOWER! EVERYONE WHO COMES NEAR ME GOES CRAZY, THEN THEY DO DREADFUL THINGS!
BUT EVEN IF MY EXISTENCE IS EVIL, I AM ONLY REFLECTING THE EVIL WITHIN PEOPLE!
IF PEOPLE WHO LOOK INTO MY EYES DO EVIL THINGS THAT IS ONLY BECAUSE THEIR NATURE WAS EVIL...
PLEASE, UNDERSTAND ME!
....
I DIDN'T WANT TO BE A WITCH! IS IT MY FAULT THAT HUMAN NATURE IS A TERRIFYING MONSTER?
PLEASE, BELIEVE ME! I'M JUST A PITIFUL WOMAN WHO FEARS HER OWN POWERS!
....


EVERYONE WHO LOOKS INTO MY EYES BECOMES A MONSTER...
BUT THAT'S NOT MY FAULT!
SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH!
SHE'S NOT AT FAULT...
THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S HUMANITY ITSELF THAT'S EVIL! THE EVIL OF MANKIND IS BEING AMPLIFIED THROUGH THE WITCH'S MIRROR!
THE WITCH'S EYES ARE MIRRORS IN WHICH PEOPLE SEE THEIR OWN EVIL NATURE!

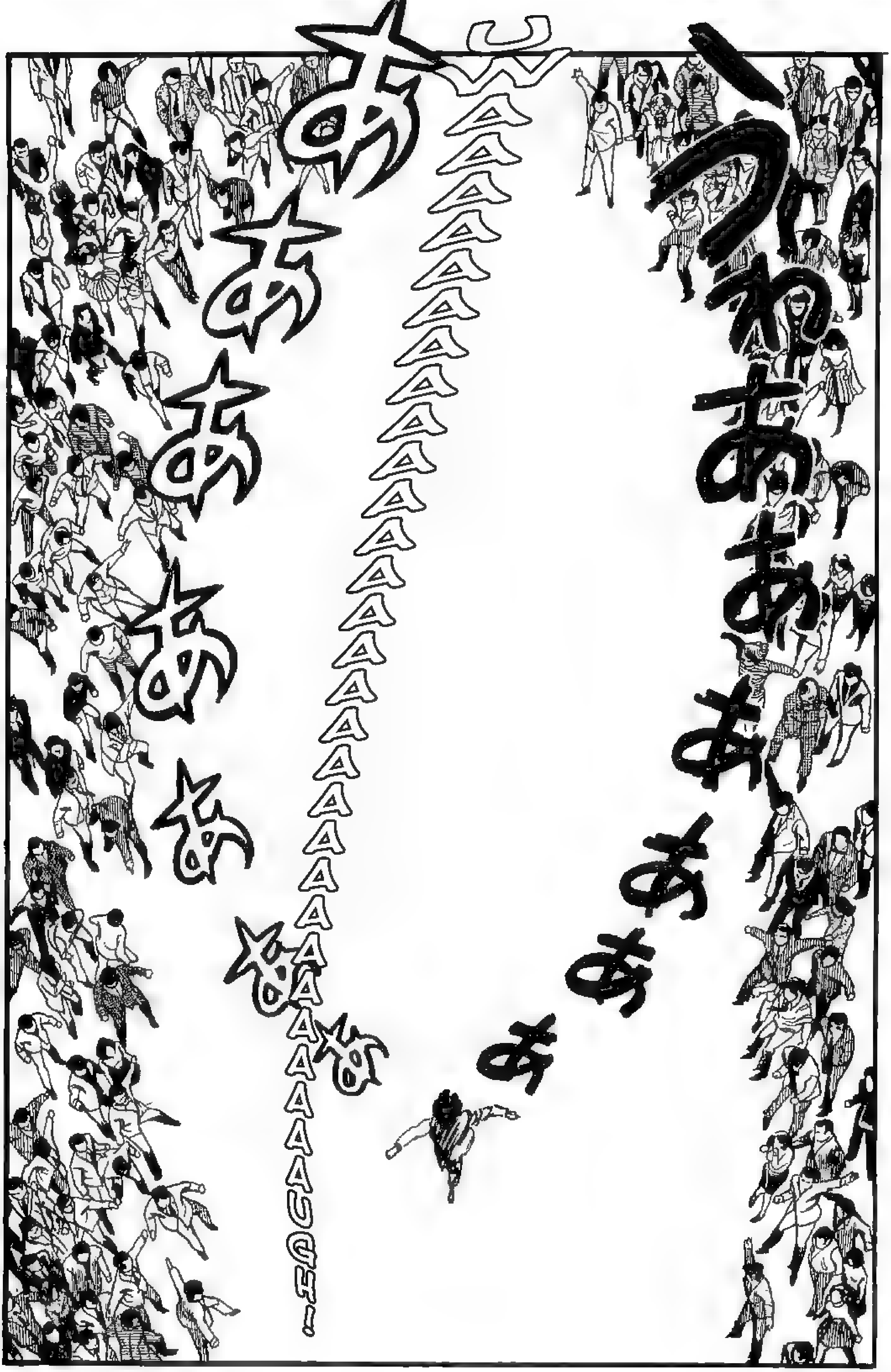

SAVE ME!
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SAVE ME... PLEASE...
TEACHER!


MISS MIWA... I CANNOT SAVE YOU...
NO, NO ONE IN THIS WORLD CAN SAVE YOU NOW.
NO ONE...
NO ONE...

THE GOLDEN-EYED WITCH- END!



CHAPTER 14:
THE WOMAN AND THE TIGER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WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAUGH!
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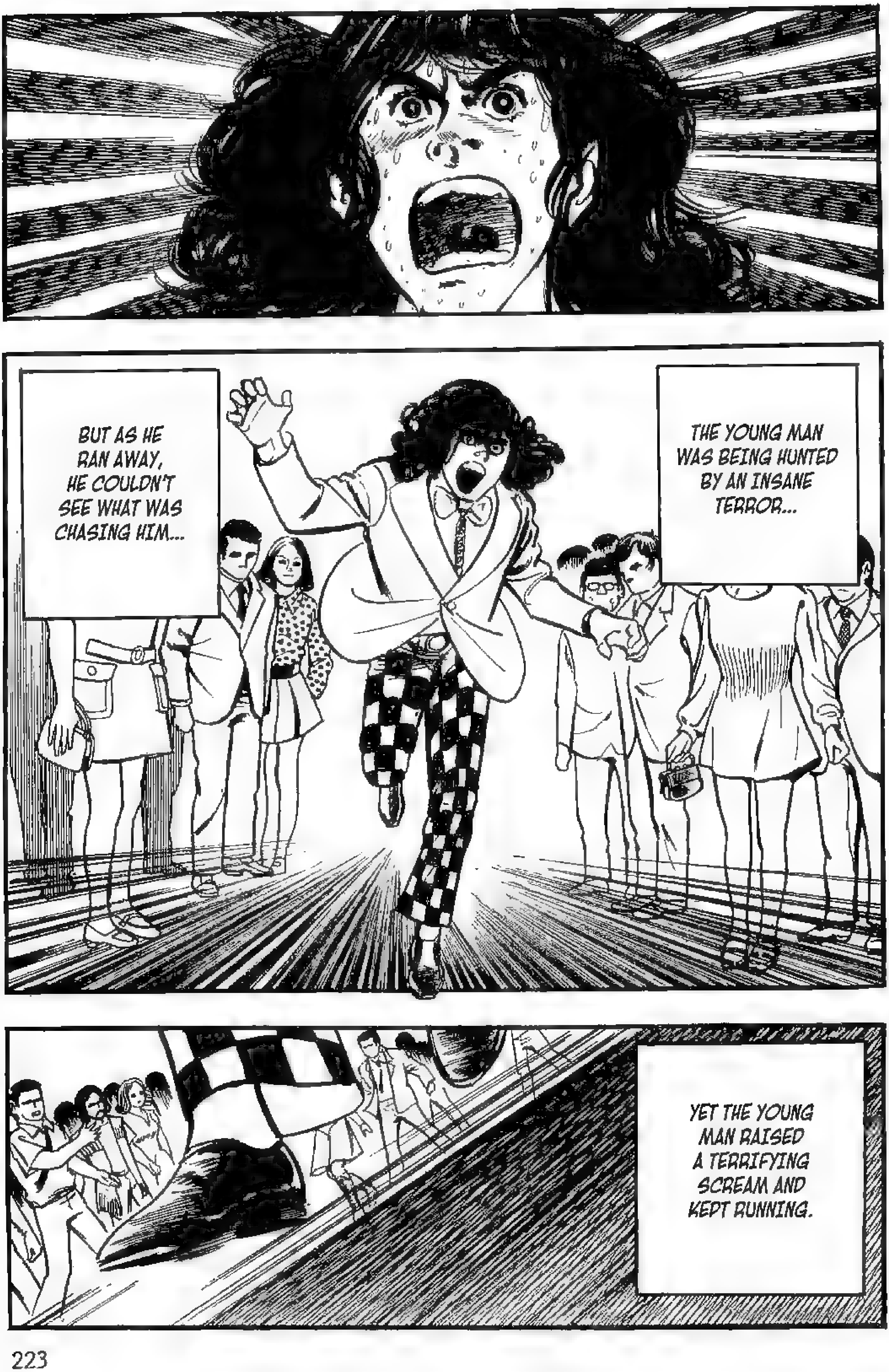
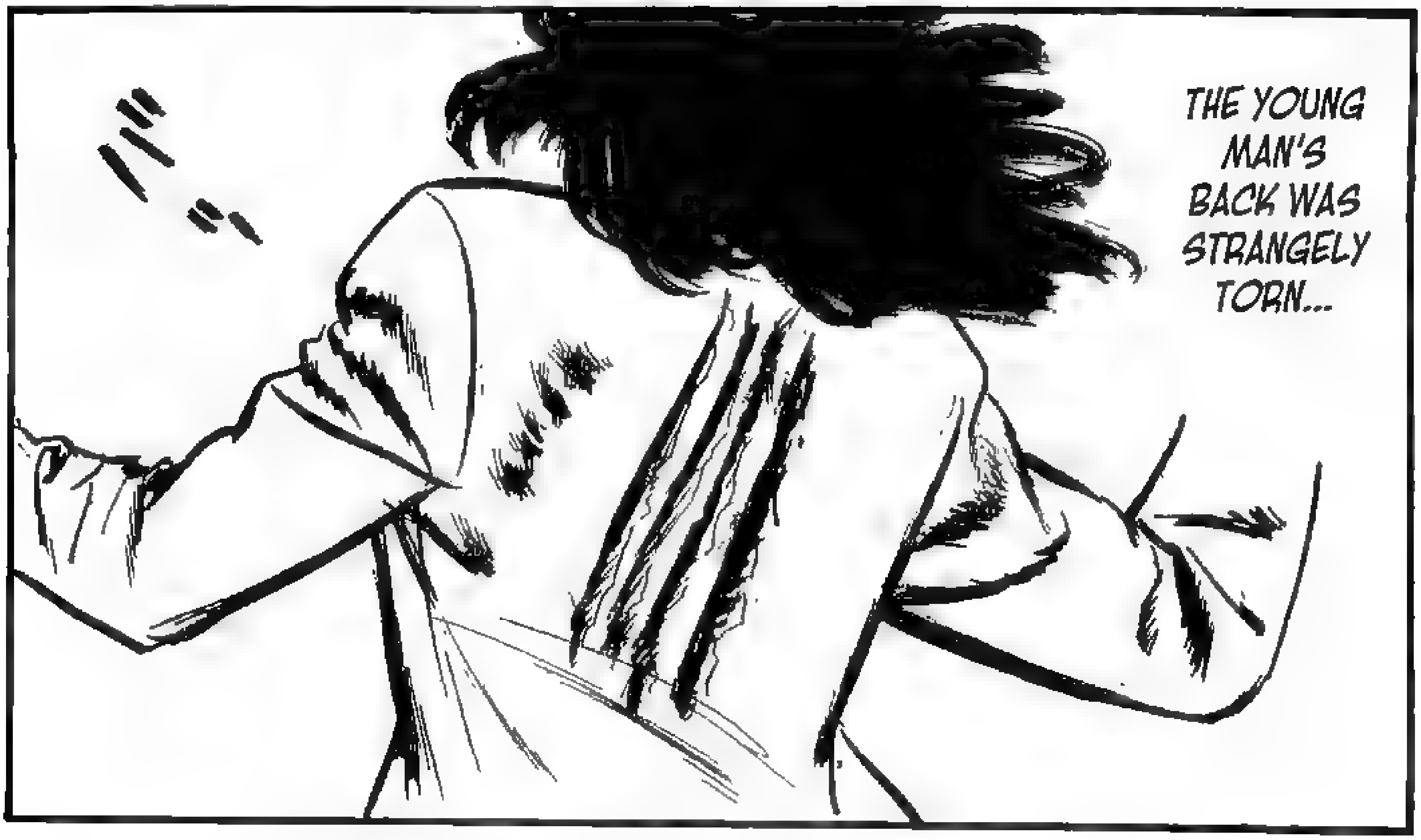
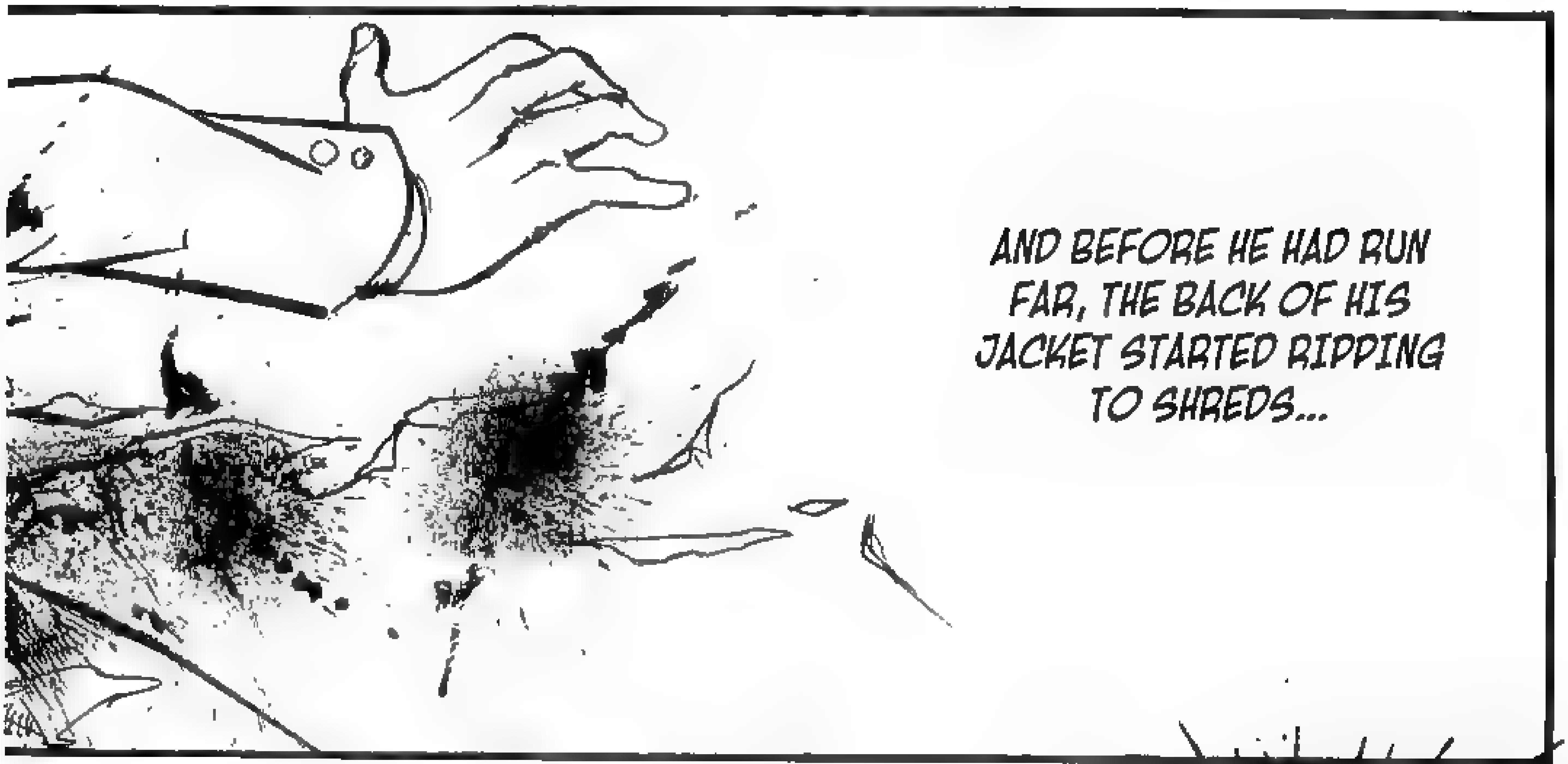
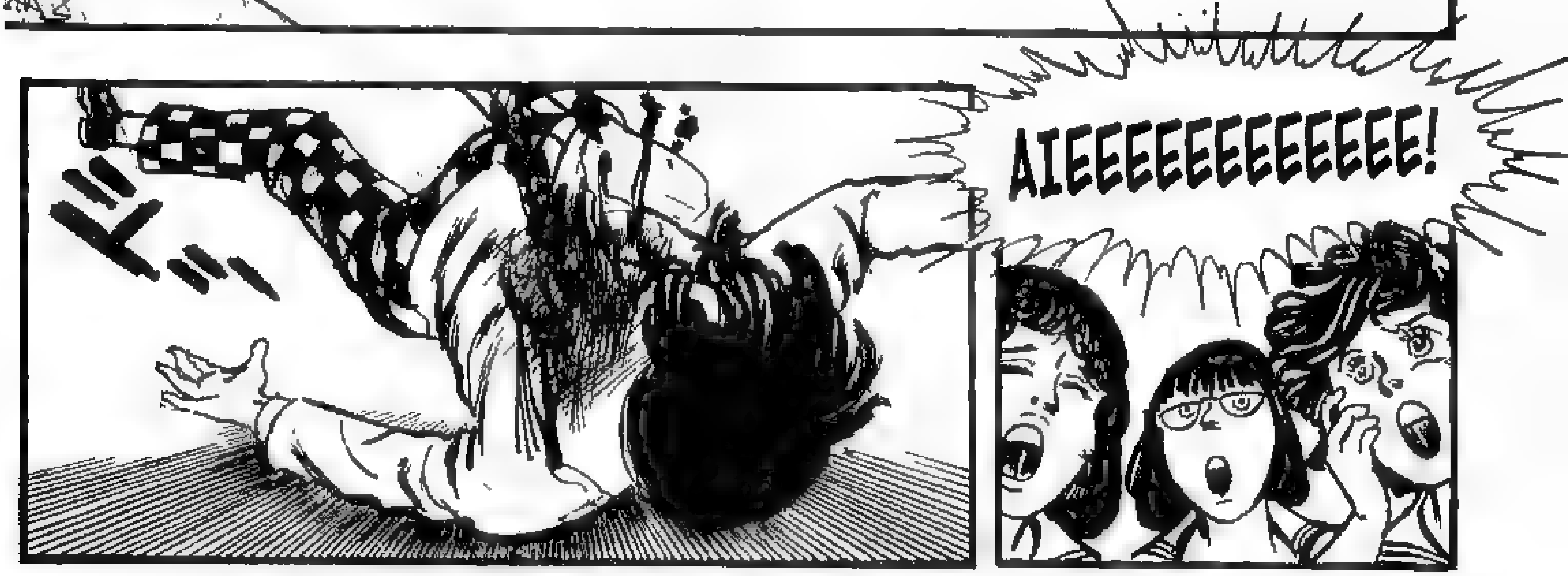
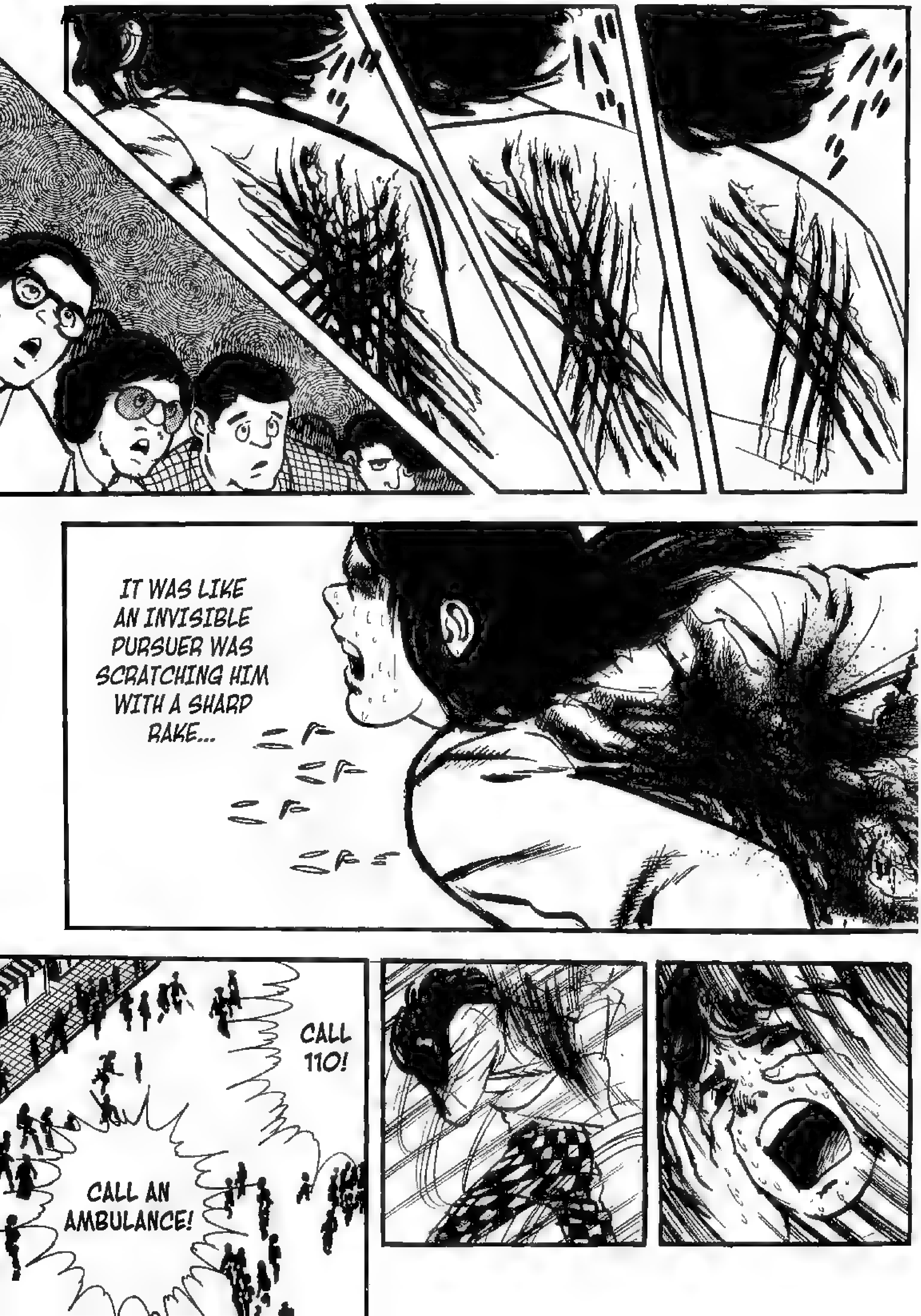
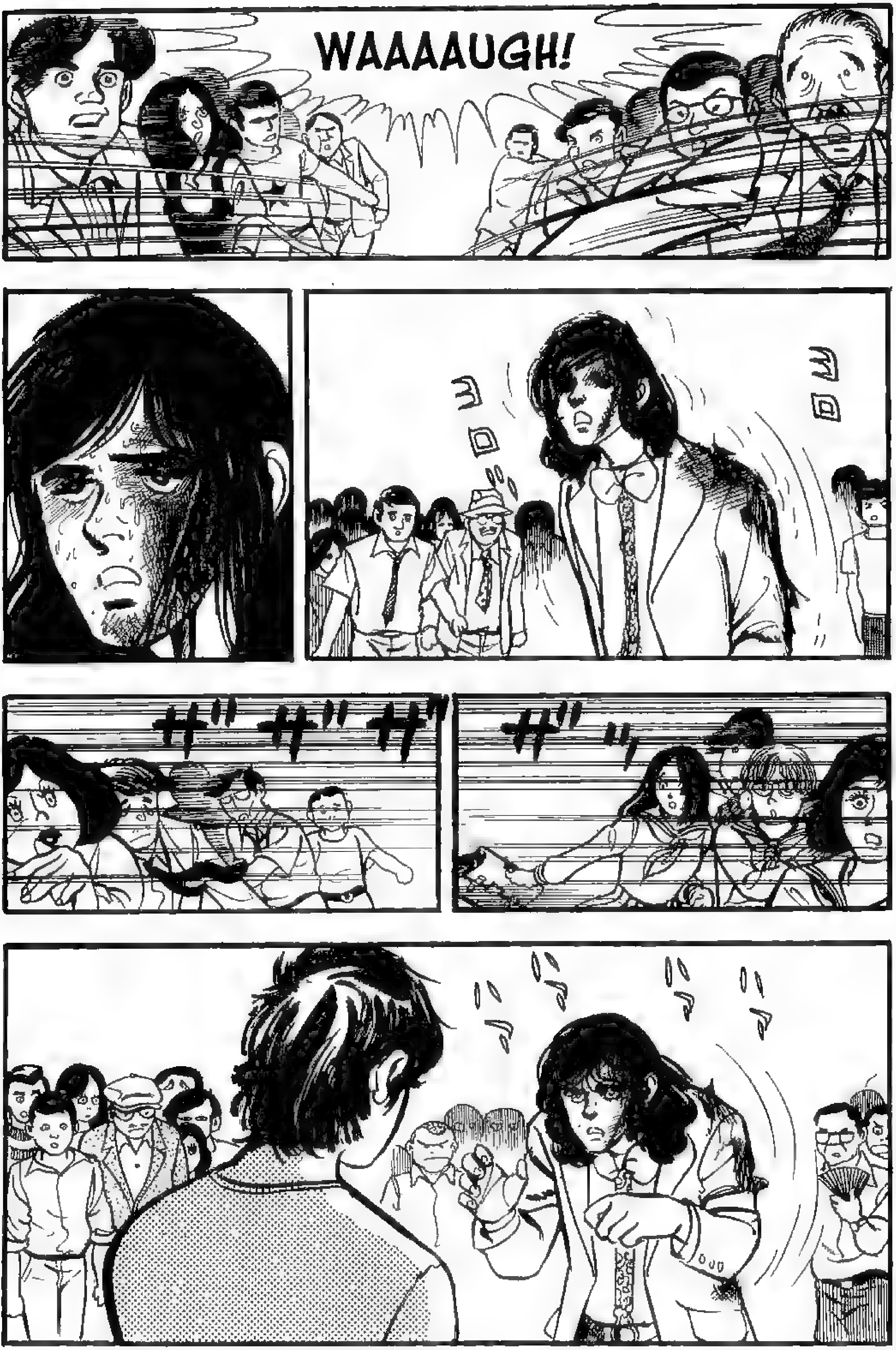

THE YOUNG MAN WAS BEING HUNTED BY AN INSANE TERROR...
BUT AS HE RAN AWAY, HE COULDN'T SEE WHAT WAS CHASING HIM...
YET THE YOUNG MAN RAISED A TERRIFYING SCREAM AND KEPT RUNNING.


THE YOUNG MAN'S BACK WAS STRANGELY TORN...


AND BEFORE HE HAD RUN FAR, THE BACK OF HIS JACKET STARTED RIPPING TO SHREDS...


AIEEEEEEEEEEEEE!


IT WAS LIKE AN INVISIBLE PURSUER WAS SCRATCHING HIM WITH A SHARP RAKE...
CALL 110!
CALL AN AMBULANCE!


WAAAAUGH!
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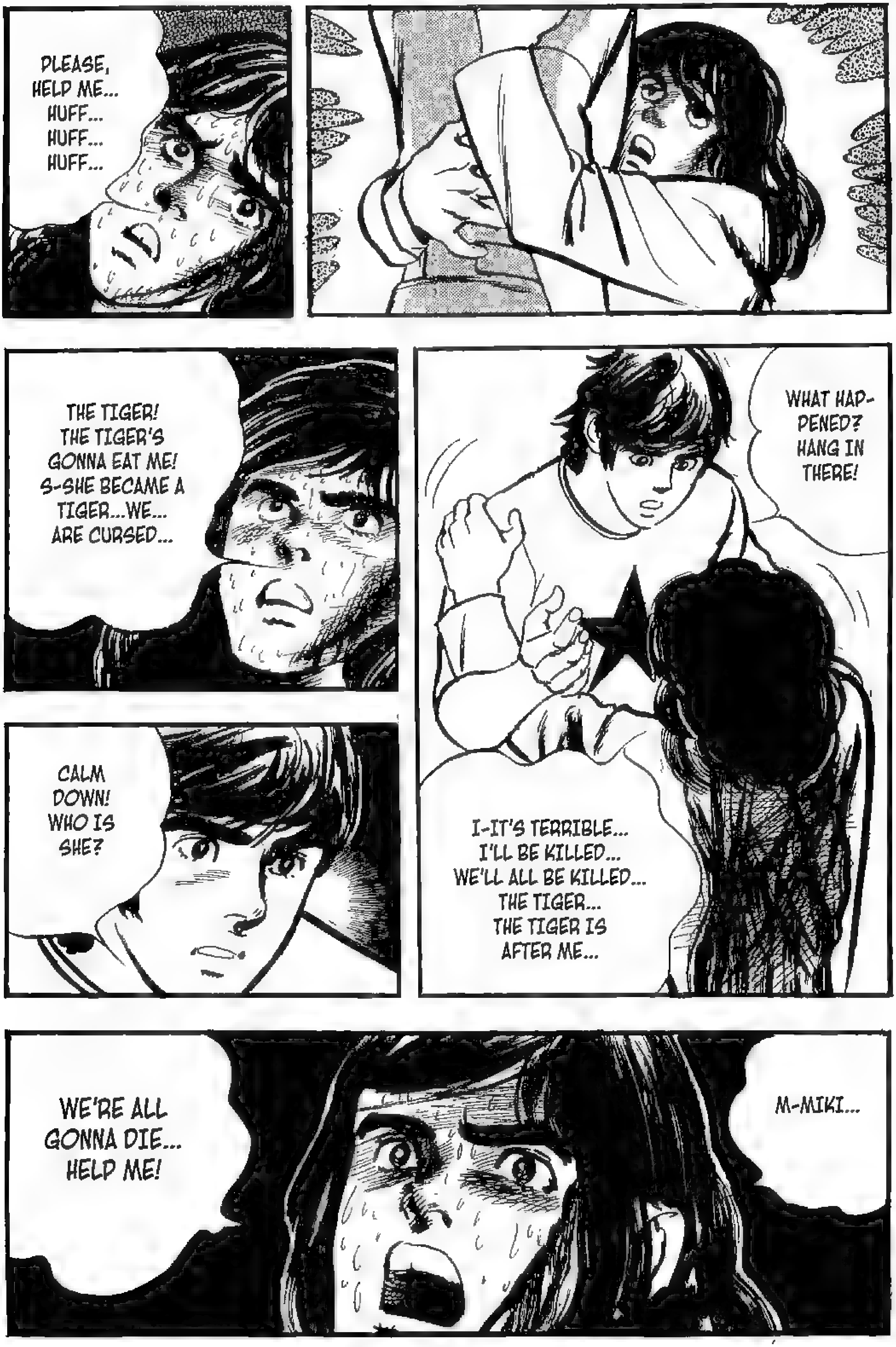
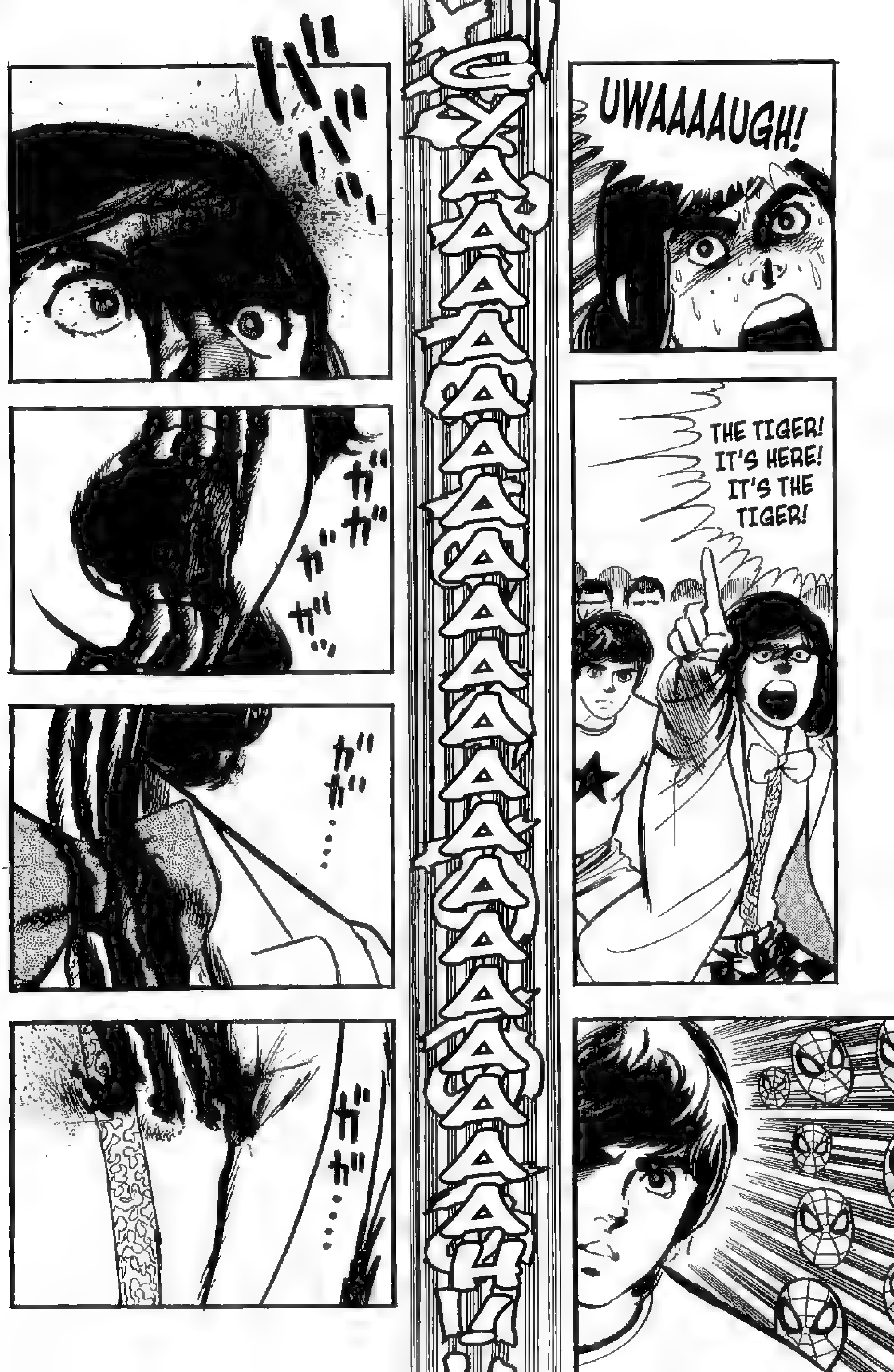

PLEASE, HELP ME... HUFF... HUFF... HUFF...
WHAT HAPPENED? HANG IN THERE!
I-IT'S TERRIBLE... I'LL BE KILLED... WE'LL ALL BE KILLED... THE TIGER... THE TIGER IS AFTER ME...
THE TIGER! THE TIGER'S GONNA EAT ME! S-SHE BECAME A TIGER...WE... ARE CURSED...
CALM DOWN! WHO IS SHE?
M-MIKI...
WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE... HELP ME!


UWAAAAUGH!
THE TIGER! IT'S HERE! IT'S THE TIGER!
GYAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!
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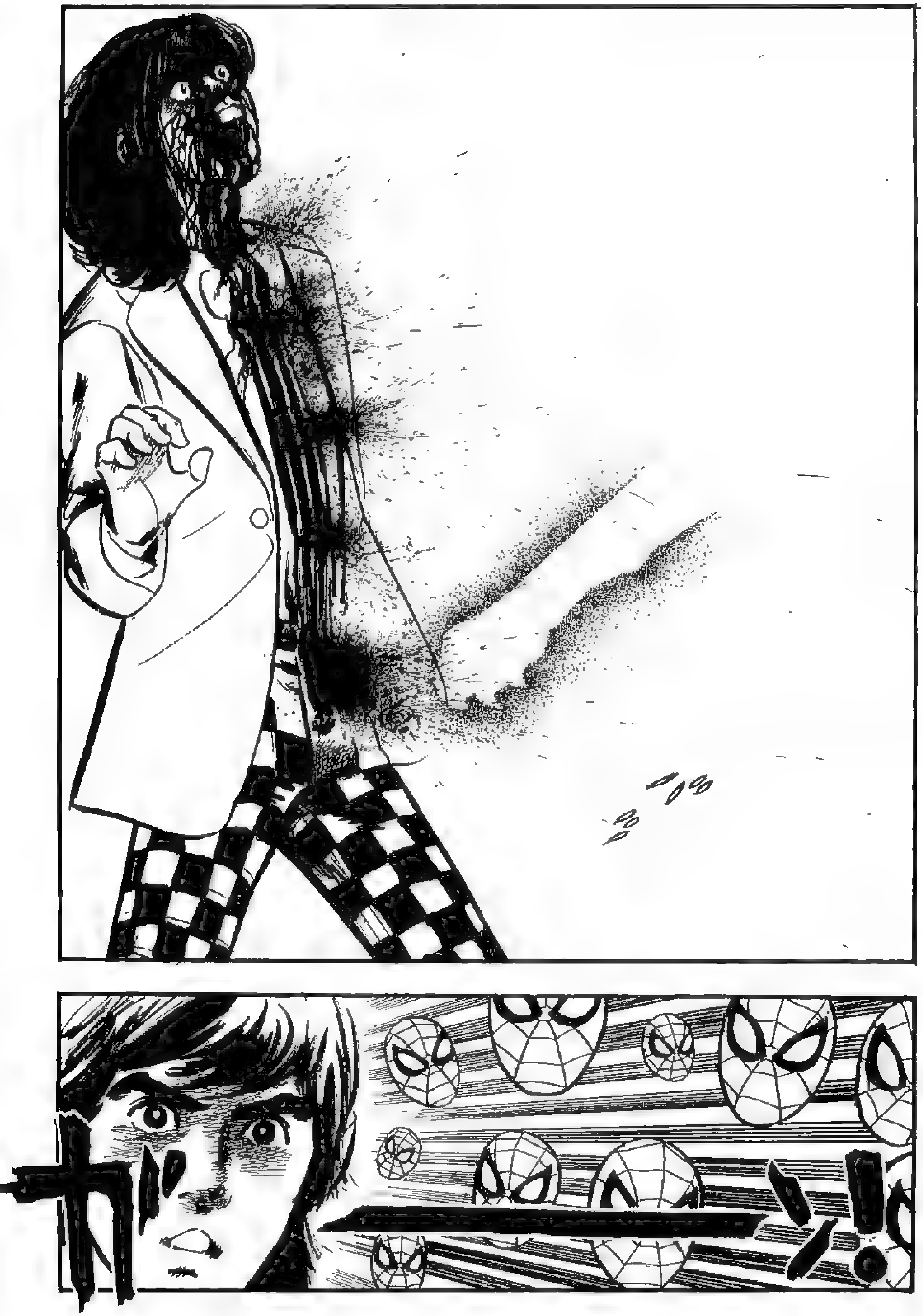
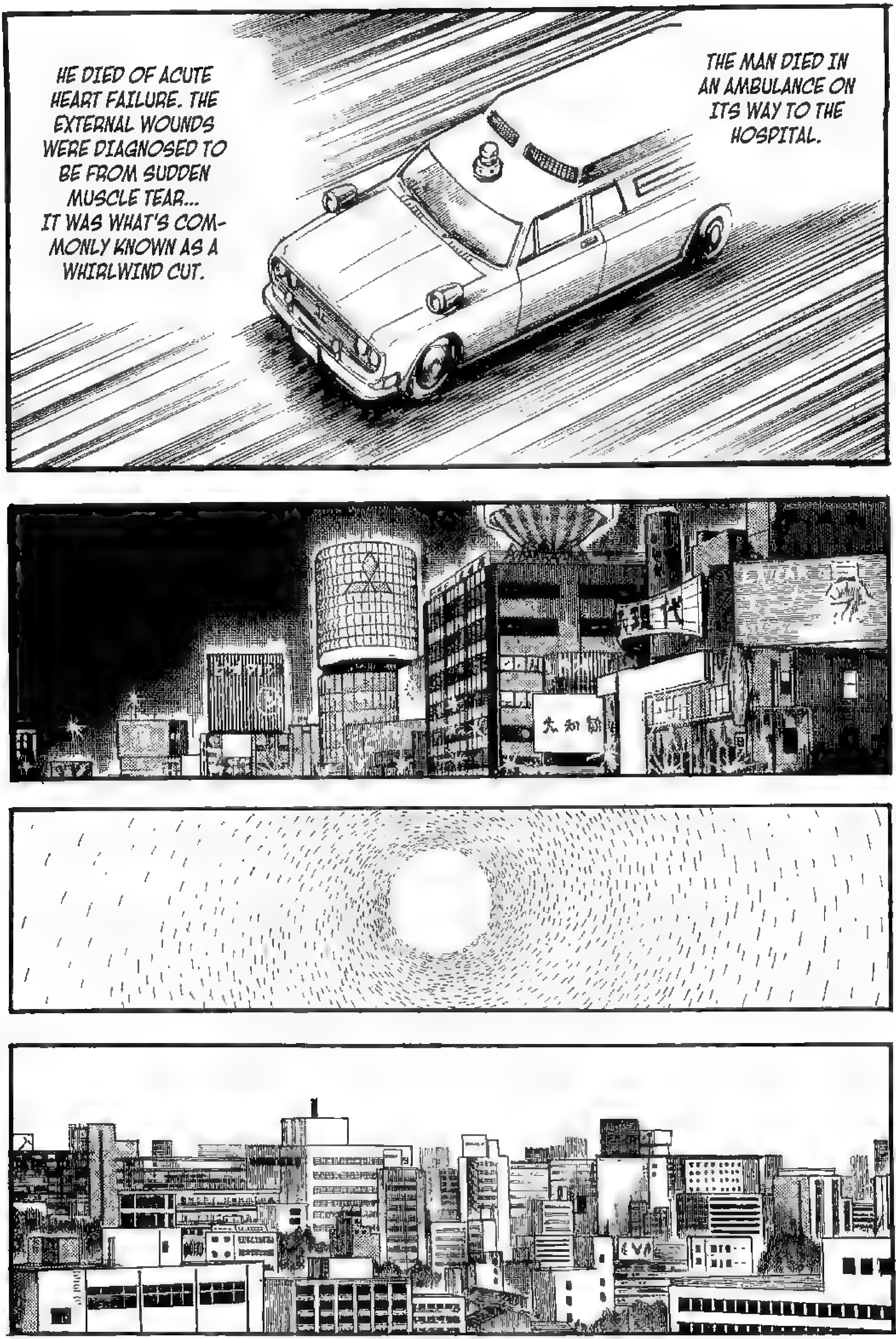
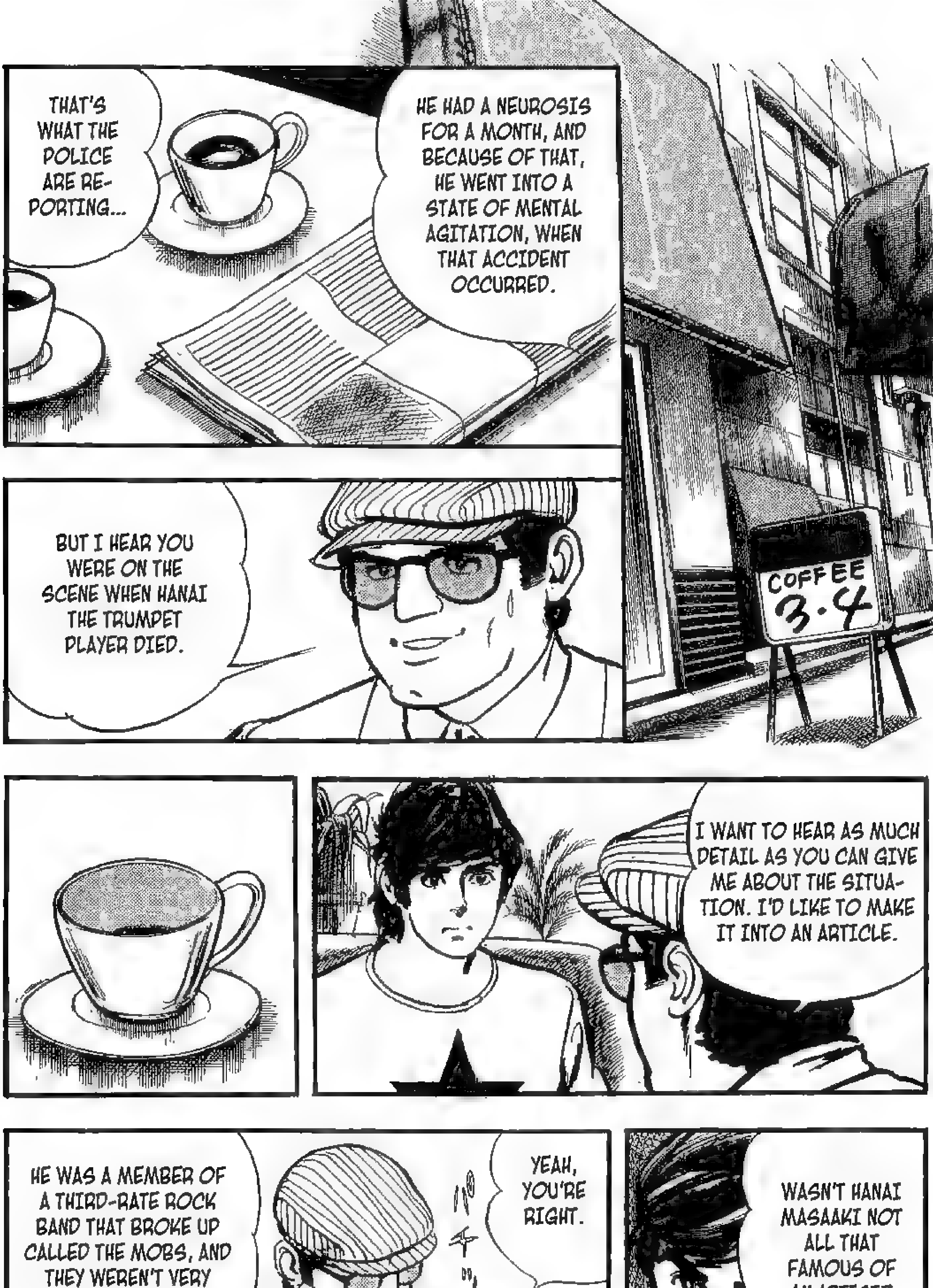
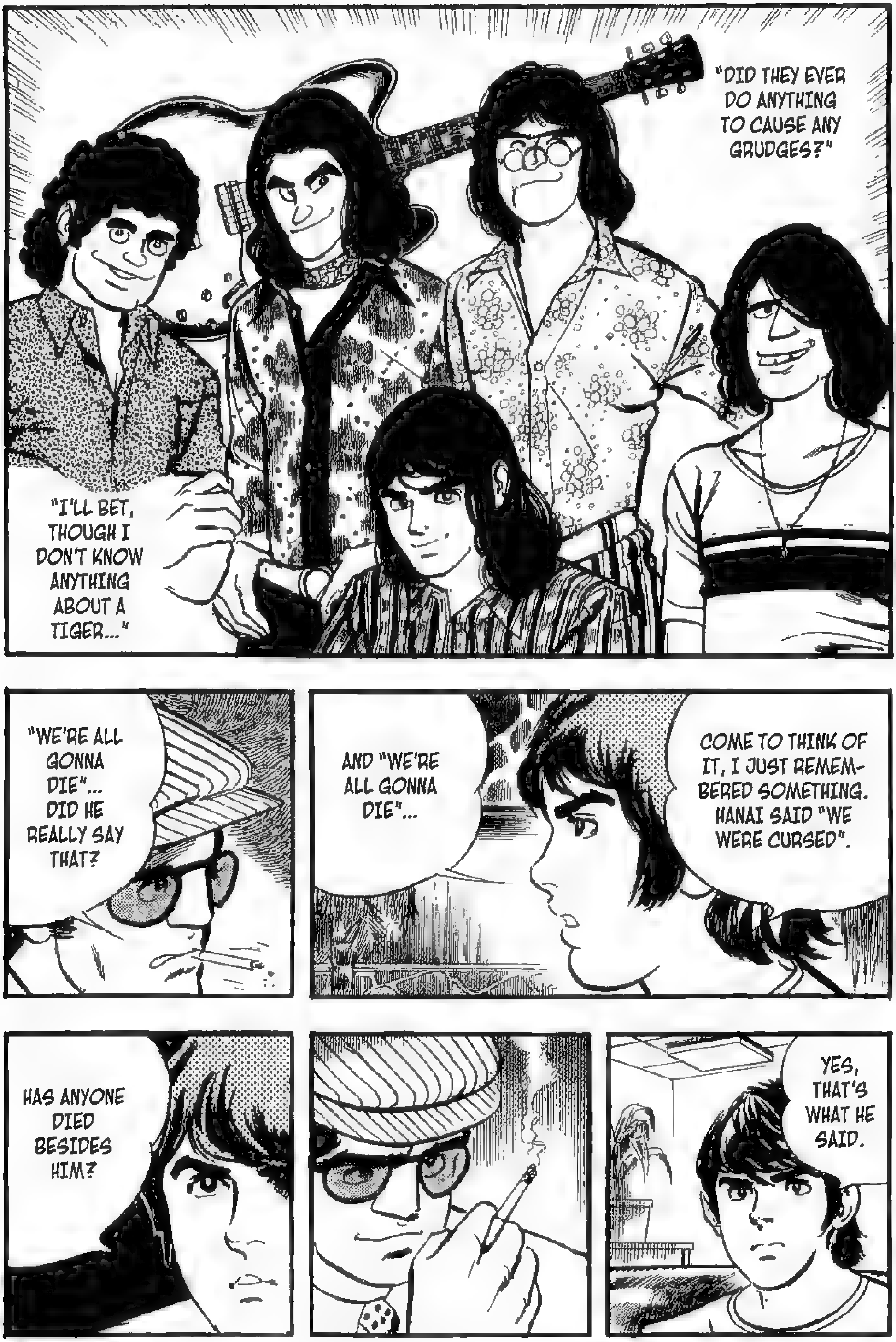
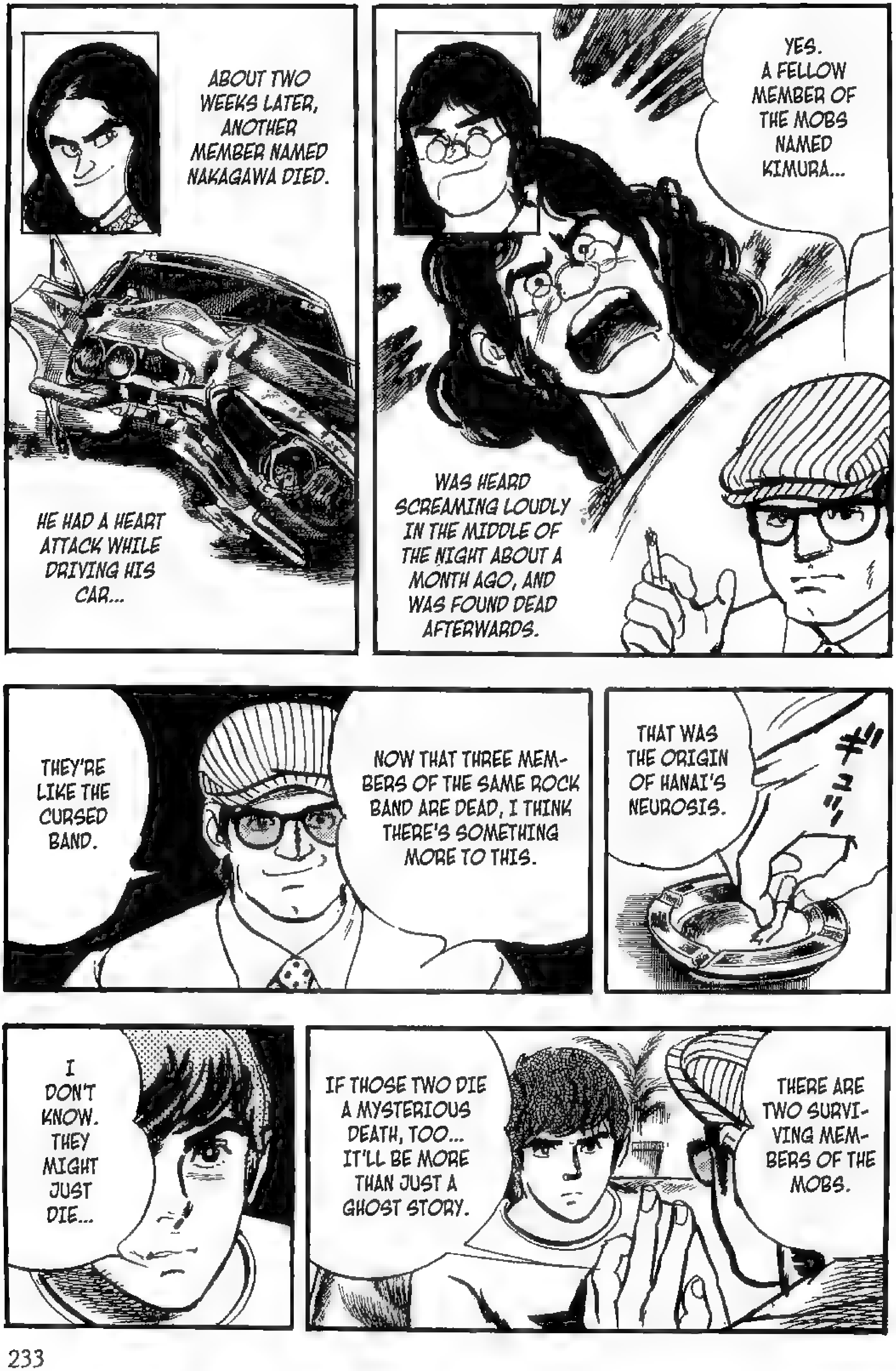
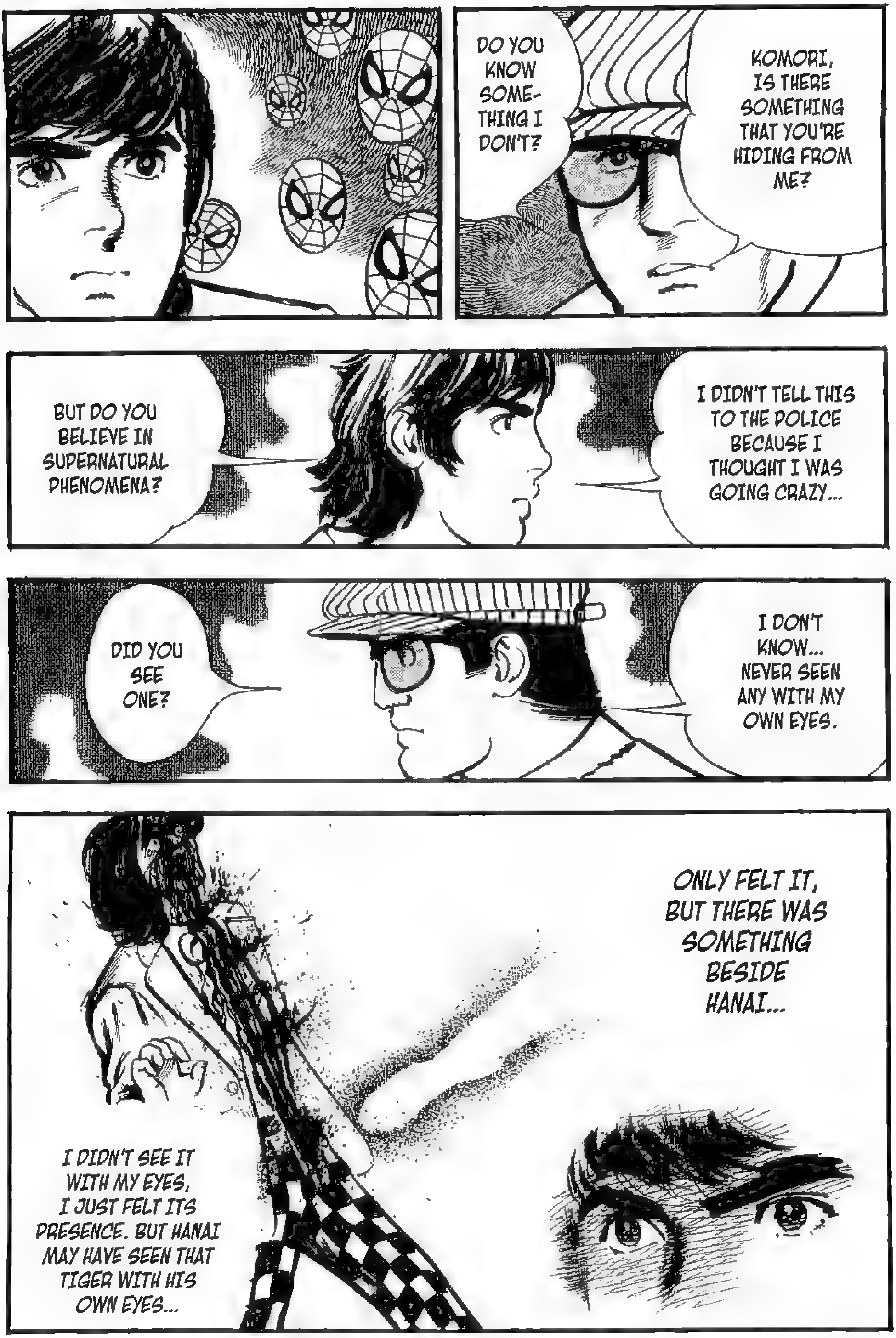


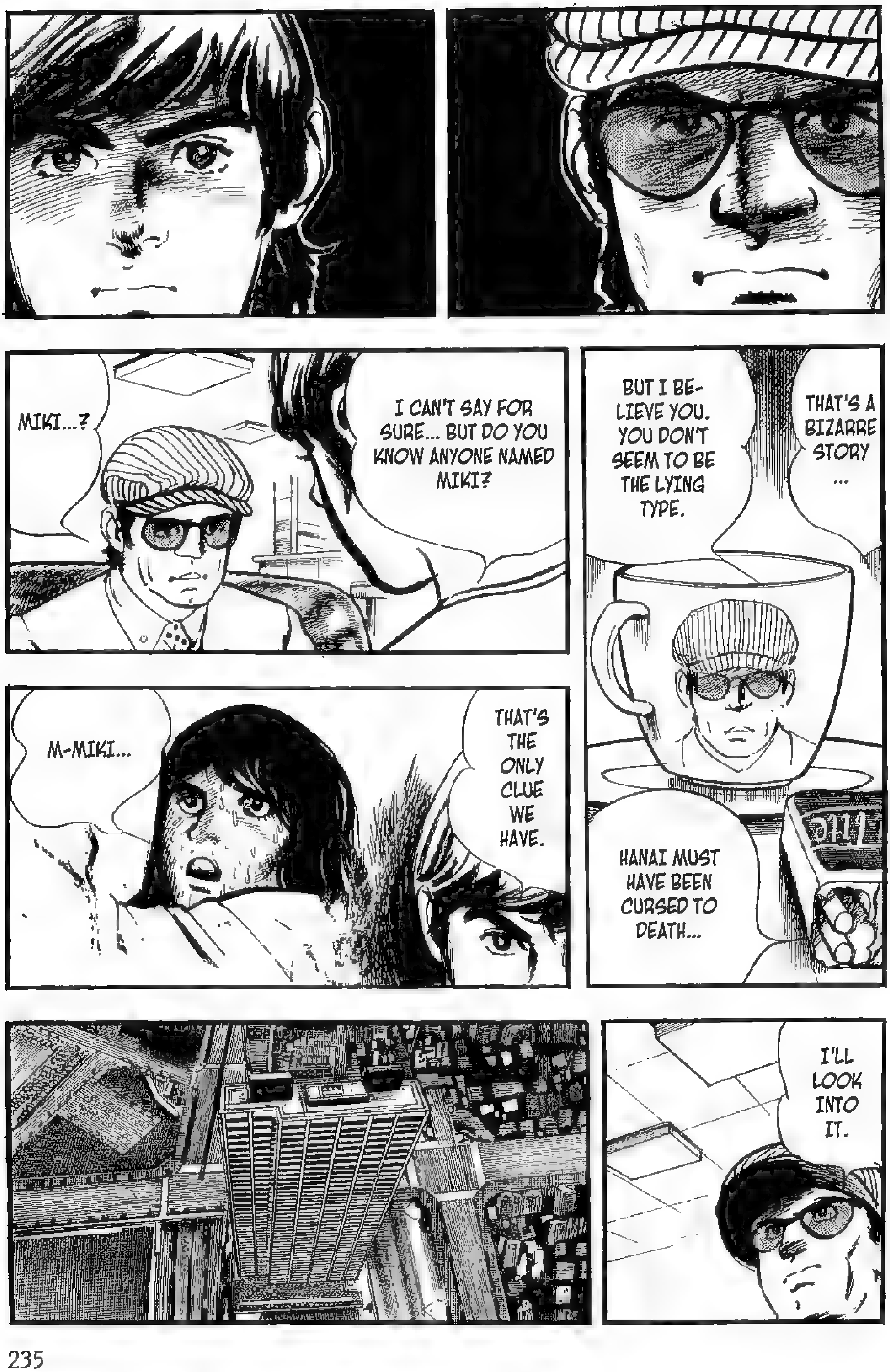

THE MAN DIED IN AN AMBULANCE ON ITS WAY TO THE HOSPITAL.
HE DIED OF ACUTE HEART FAILURE. THE EXTERNAL WOUNDS WERE DIAGNOSED TO BE FROM SUDDEN MUSCLE TEAR... IT WAS WHAT'S COMMONLY KNOWN AS A WHIRLWIND CUT.

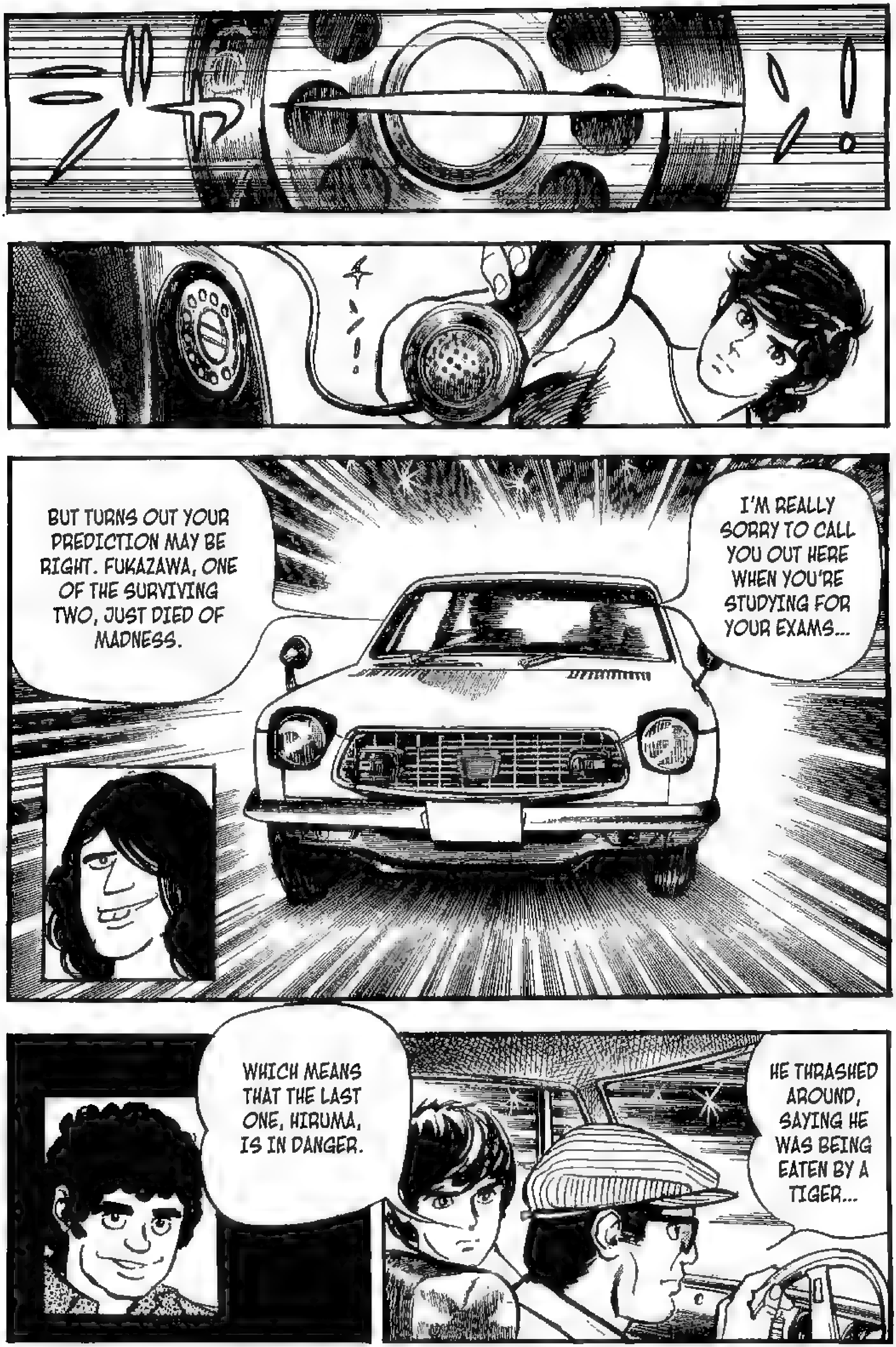

COFFEE 3・4
HE HAD A NEUROSIS FOR A MONTH, AND BECAUSE OF THAT, HE WENT INTO A STATE OF MENTAL AGITATION, WHEN THAT ACCIDENT OCCURRED.
THAT'S WHAT THE POLICE ARE REPORTING...
BUT I HEAR YOU WERE ON THE SCENE WHEN HANAI THE TRUMPET PLAYER DIED.
I WANT TO HEAR AS MUCH DETAIL AS YOU CAN GIVE ME ABOUT THE SITUATION. I'D LIKE TO MAKE IT INTO AN ARTICLE.
WASN'T HANAI MASAAKI NOT ALL THAT FAMOUS OF AN ARTIST?
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
HE WAS A MEMBER OF A THIRD-RATE ROCK BAND THAT BROKE UP CALLED THE MOBS, AND THEY WEREN'T VERY HIGH-STANDING YOUNG FOLK.

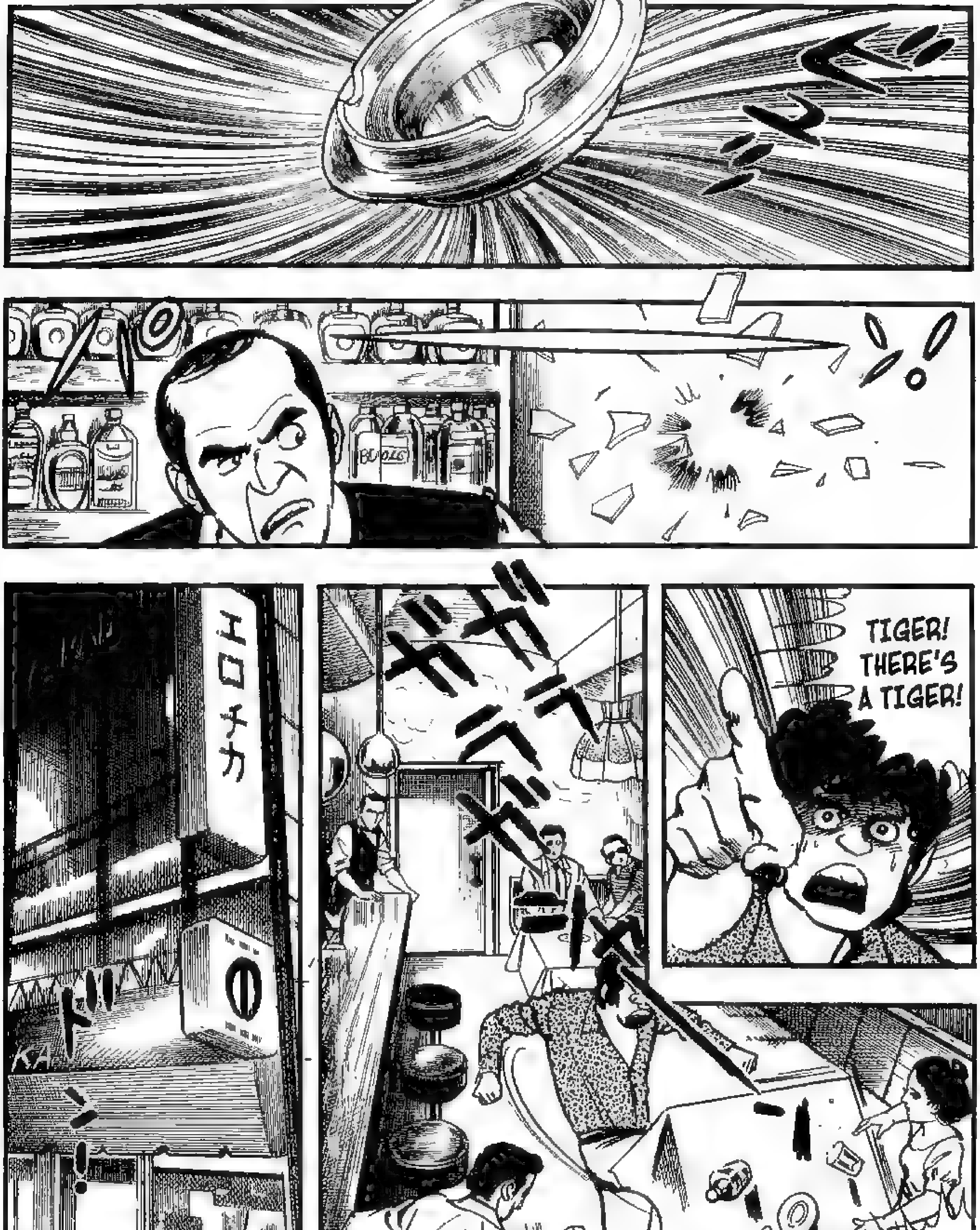

"DID THEY EVER DO ANYTHING TO CAUSE ANY GRUDGES?"
"I'LL BET, THOUGH I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT A TIGER..."
COME TO THINK OF IT, I JUST REMEMBERED SOMETHING. HANAI SAID "WE WERE CURSED".
AND "WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE"...
"WE'RE ALL GONNA DIE"... DID HE REALLY SAY THAT?
YES, THAT'S WHAT HE SAID.
HAS ANYONE DIED BESIDES HIM?


YES. A FELLOW MEMBER OF THE MOBS NAMED KIMURA...
WAS HEARD SCREAMING LOUDLY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT ABOUT A MONTH AGO, AND WAS FOUND DEAD AFTERWARDS.
ABOUT TWO WEEKS LATER, ANOTHER MEMBER NAMED NAKAGAWA DIED.
HE HAD A HEART ATTACK WHILE DRIVING HIS CAR...
ギュッ
THAT WAS THE ORIGIN OF HANAI'S NEUROSIS.
NOW THAT THREE MEMBERS OF THE SAME ROCK BAND ARE DEAD, I THINK THERE'S SOMETHING MORE TO THIS.
THEY'RE LIKE THE CURSED BAND.
THERE ARE TWO SURVIVING MEMBERS OF THE MOBS.
IF THOSE TWO DIE A MYSTERIOUS DEATH, TOO... IT'LL BE MORE THAN JUST A GHOST STORY.
I DON'T KNOW. THEY MIGHT JUST DIE...


KOMORI, IS THERE SOMETHING THAT YOU'RE HIDING FROM ME?
DO YOU KNOW SOME-THING I DON'T?
I DIDN'T TELL THIS TO THE POLICE BECAUSE I THOUGHT I WAS GOING CRAZY...
BUT DO YOU BELIEVE IN SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA?
I DON'T KNOW... NEVER SEEN ANY WITH MY OWN EYES.
DID YOU SEE ONE?
ONLY FELT IT, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING BESIDE HANAI...
I DIDN'T SEE IT WITH MY EYES, I JUST FELT ITS PRESENCE. BUT HANAI MAY HAVE SEEN THAT TIGER WITH HIS OWN EYES...


THAT'S A BIZARRE STORY ...
BUT I BELIEVE YOU. YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE THE LYING TYPE.
HANAI MUST HAVE BEEN CURSED TO DEATH...
I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE... BUT DO YOU KNOW ANYONE NAMED MIKI?
MIKI...?
THAT'S THE ONLY CLUE WE HAVE.
M-MIKI...
I'LL LOOK INTO IT.


I'M REALLY SORRY TO CALL YOU OUT HERE WHEN YOU'RE STUDYING FOR YOUR EXAMS...
BUT TURNS OUT YOUR PREDICTION MAY BE RIGHT. FUKAZAWA, ONE OF THE SURVIVING TWO, JUST DIED OF MADNESS.
HE THRASHED AROUND, SAYING HE WAS BEING EATEN BY A TIGER...
WHICH MEANS THAT THE LAST ONE, HIRUMA, IS IN DANGER.


TIGER! THERE'S A TIGER!
AIEEEEE EEE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
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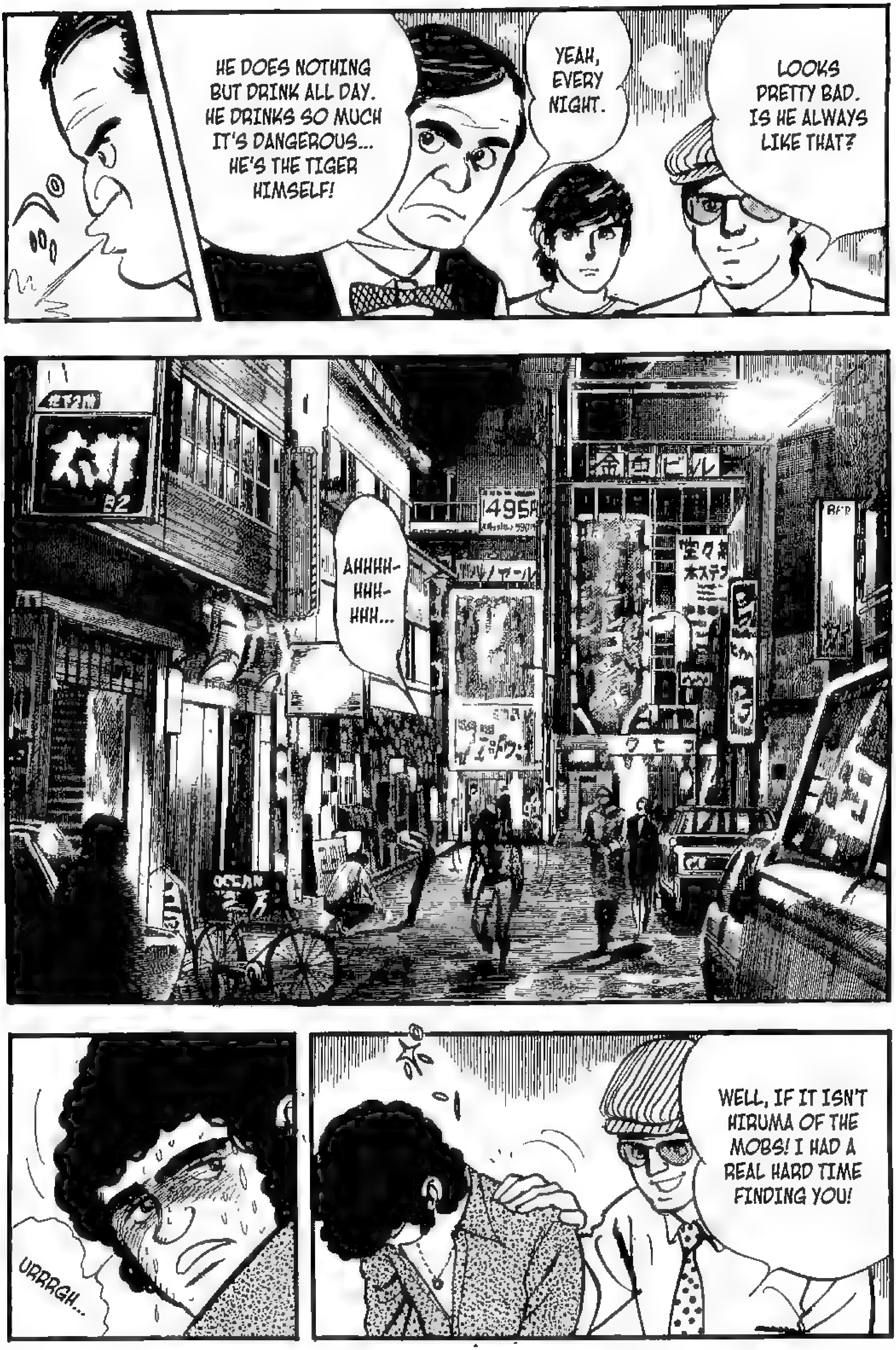
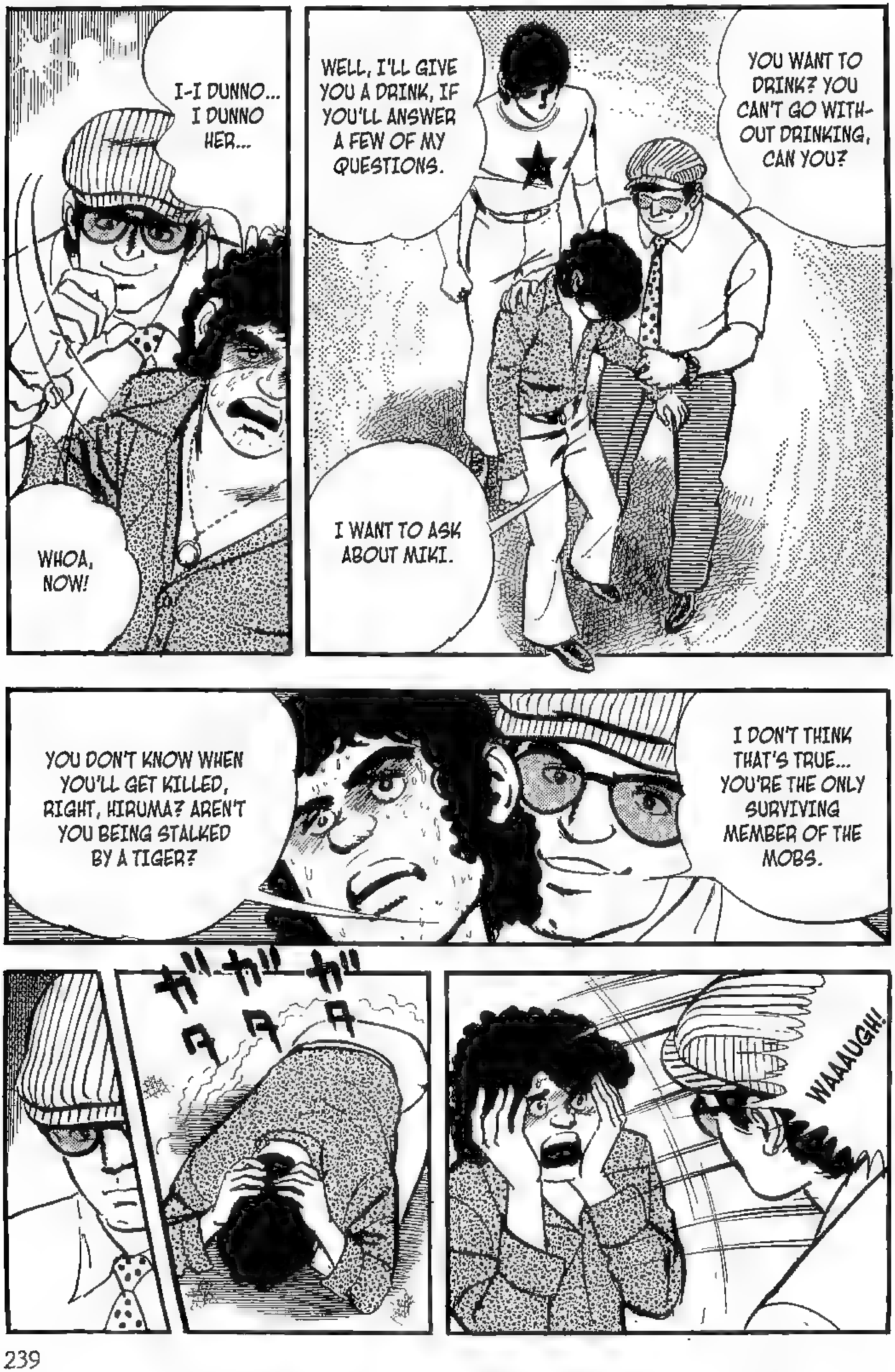
KA
GET LOST ALREADY!


LOOKS PRETTY BAD. IS HE ALWAYS LIKE THAT?
YEAH, EVERY NIGHT.
HE DOES NOTHING BUT DRINK ALL DAY. HE DRINKS SO MUCH IT'S DANGEROUS... HE'S THE TIGER HIMSELF!
AHHHH-HHH-HHH...
WELL, IF IT ISN'T HIRUMA OF THE MOBS! I HAD A REAL HARD TIME FINDING YOU!
URRRGH...


YOU WANT TO DRINK? YOU CAN'T GO WITHOUT DRINKING, CAN YOU?
WELL, I'LL GIVE YOU A DRINK, IF YOU'LL ANSWER A FEW OF MY QUESTIONS.
I WANT TO ASK ABOUT MIKI.
I-I DUNNO... I DUNNO HER...
WHOA, NOW!
I DON'T THINK THAT'S TRUE... YOU'RE THE ONLY SURVIVING MEMBER OF THE MOBS.
YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN YOU'LL GET KILLED, RIGHT, HIRUMA? AREN'T YOU BEING STALKED BY A TIGER?
WAAAUGH!
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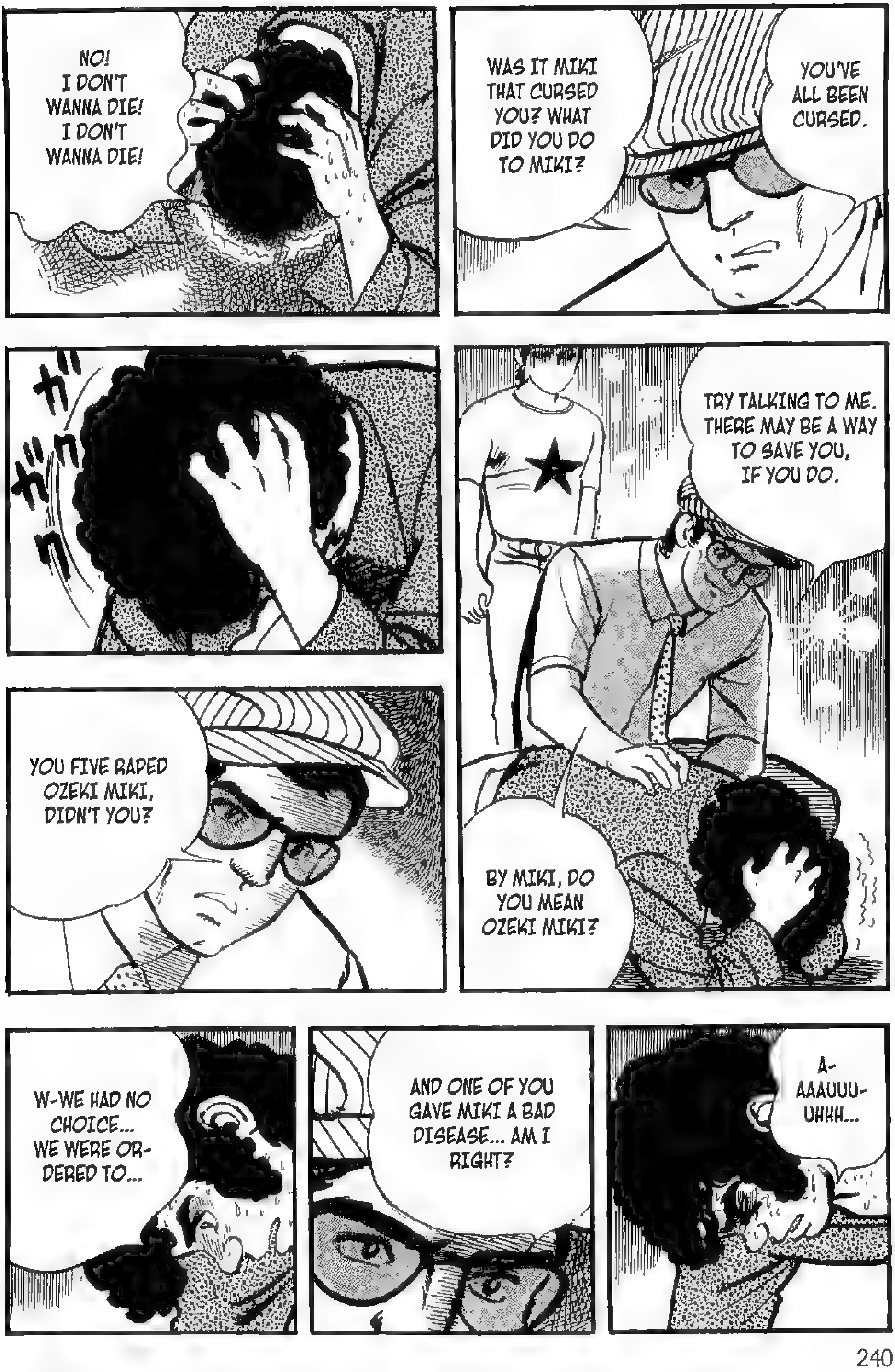
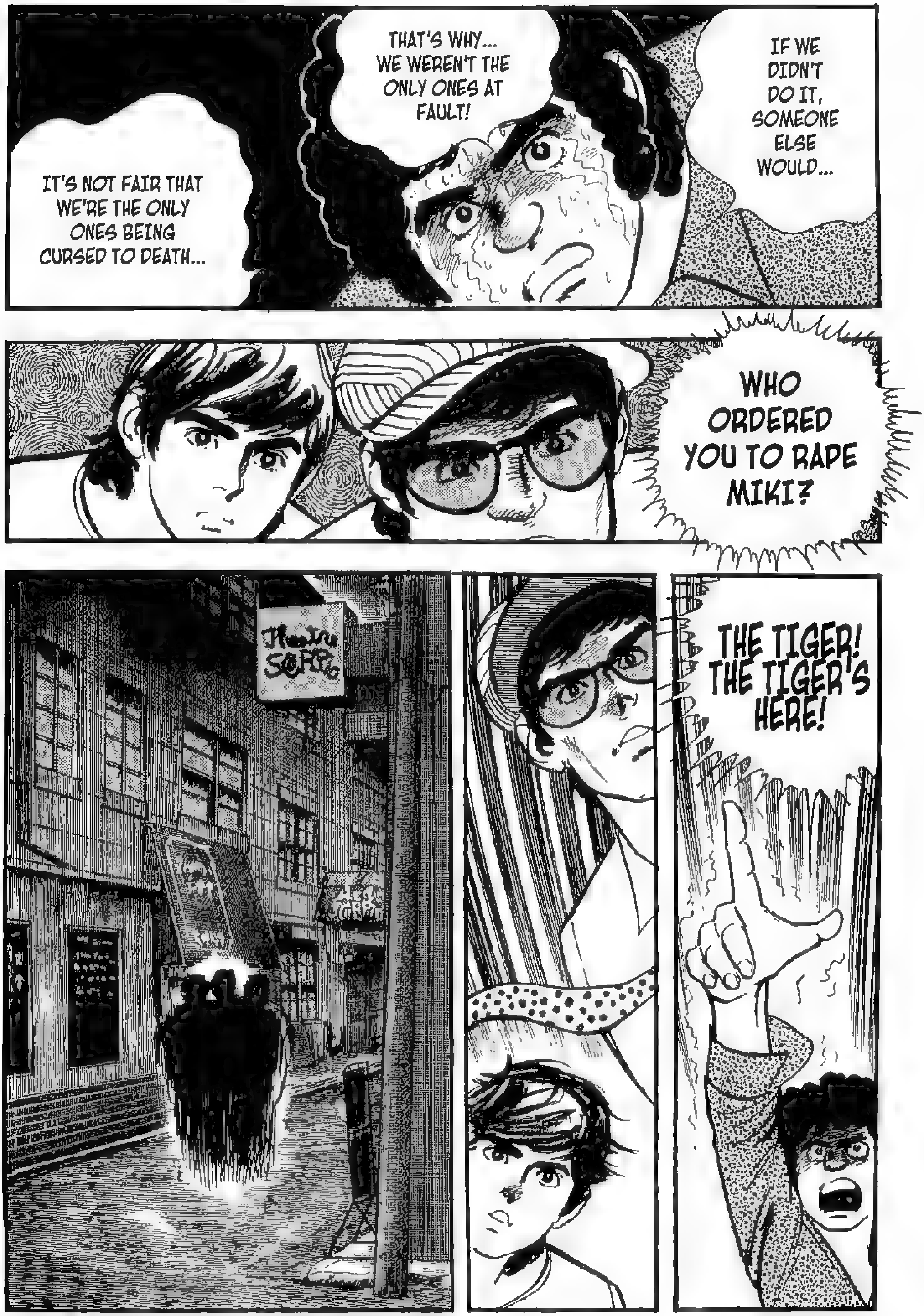
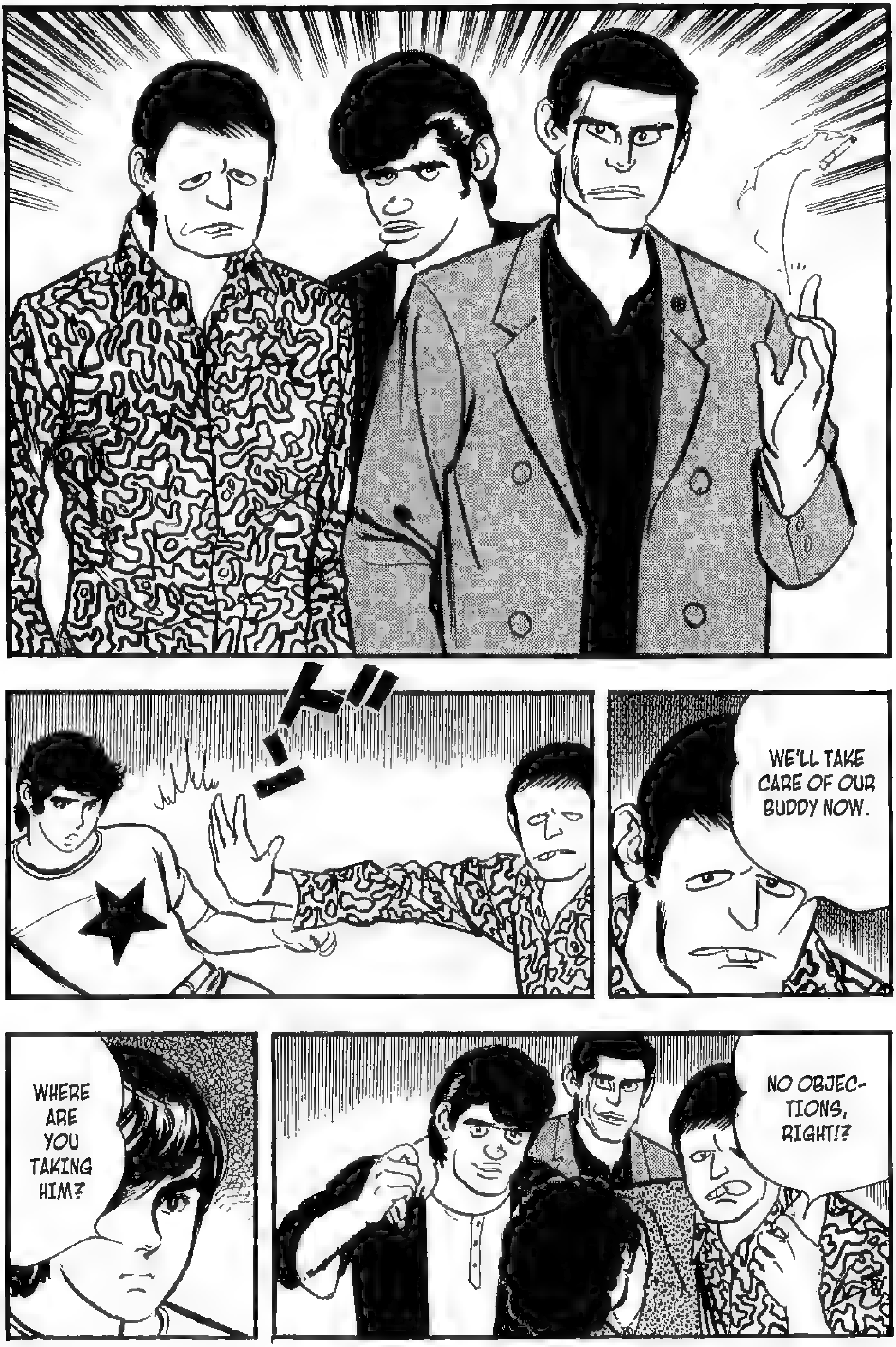
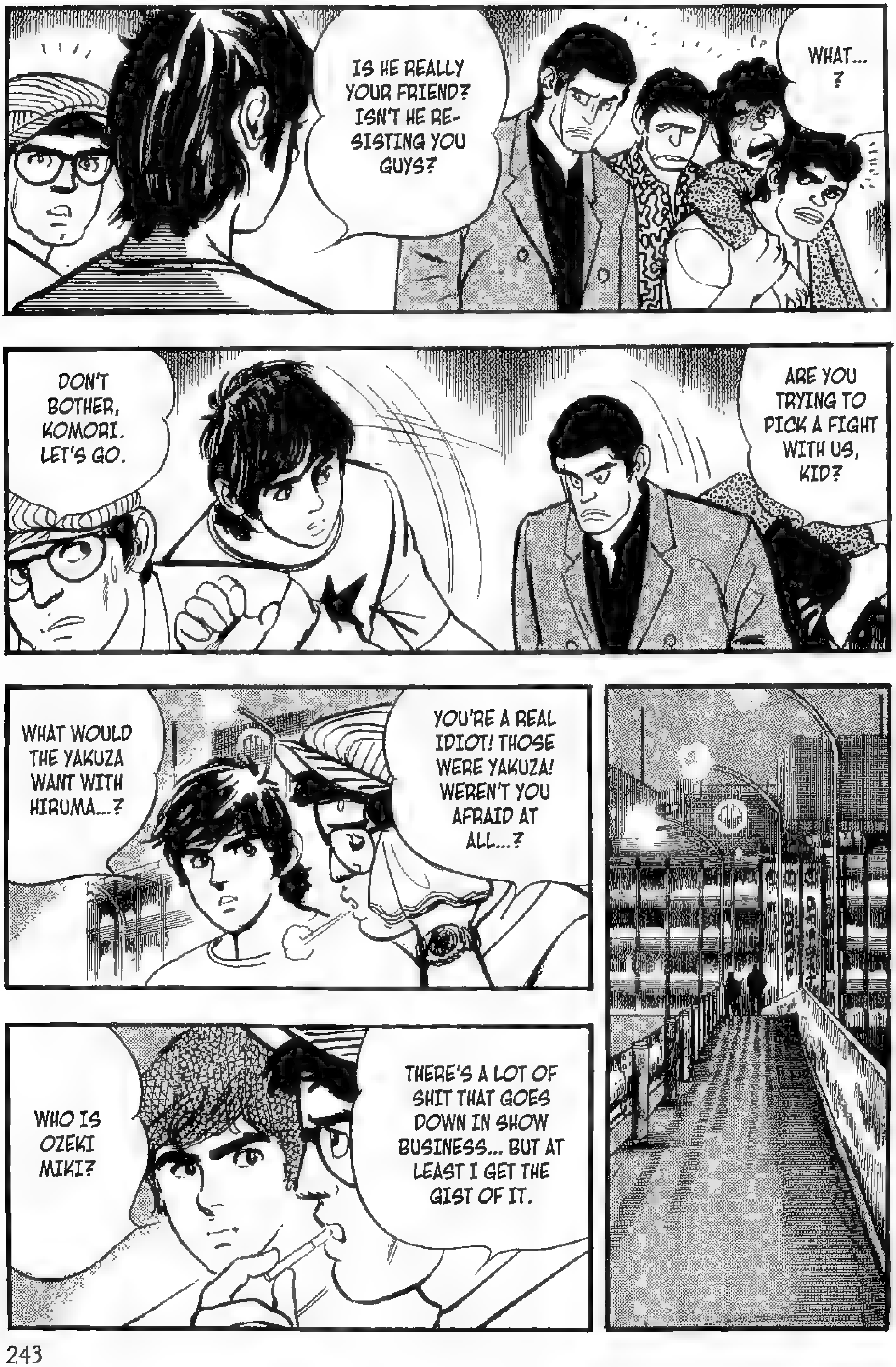
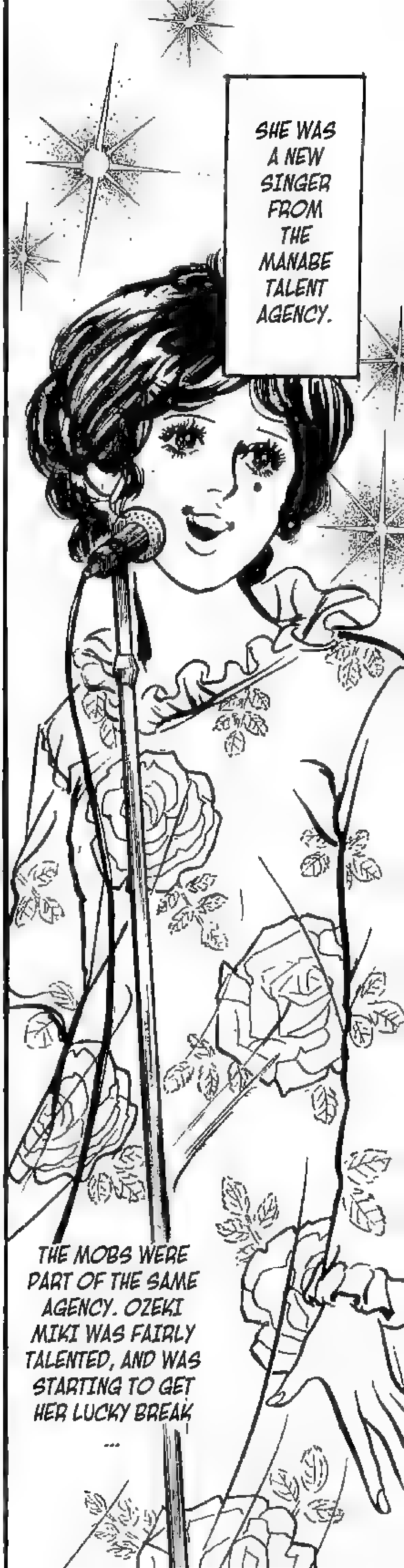
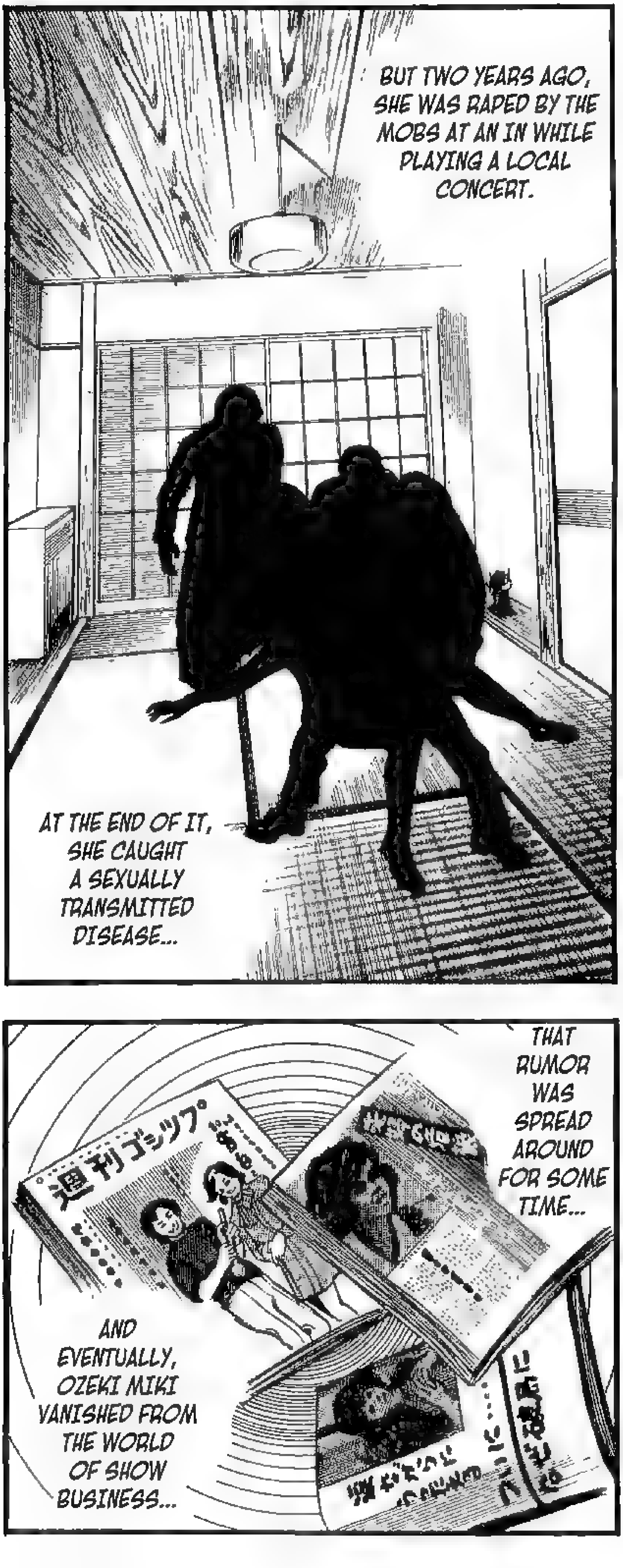

YOU'VE ALL BEEN CURSED.
WAS IT MIKI THAT CURSED YOU? WHAT DID YOU DO TO MIKI?
NO! I DON'T WANNA DIE! I DON'T WANNA DIE!
TRY TALKING TO ME. THERE MAY BE A WAY TO SAVE YOU, IF YOU DO.
BY MIKI, DO YOU MEAN OZEKI MIKI?
ガクガク
YOU FIVE RAPED OZEKI MIKI, DIDN'T YOU?
A-AAAUUU-UHHH...
AND ONE OF YOU GAVE MIKI A BAD DISEASE... AM I RIGHT?
W-WE HAD NO CHOICE... WE WERE ORDERED TO...

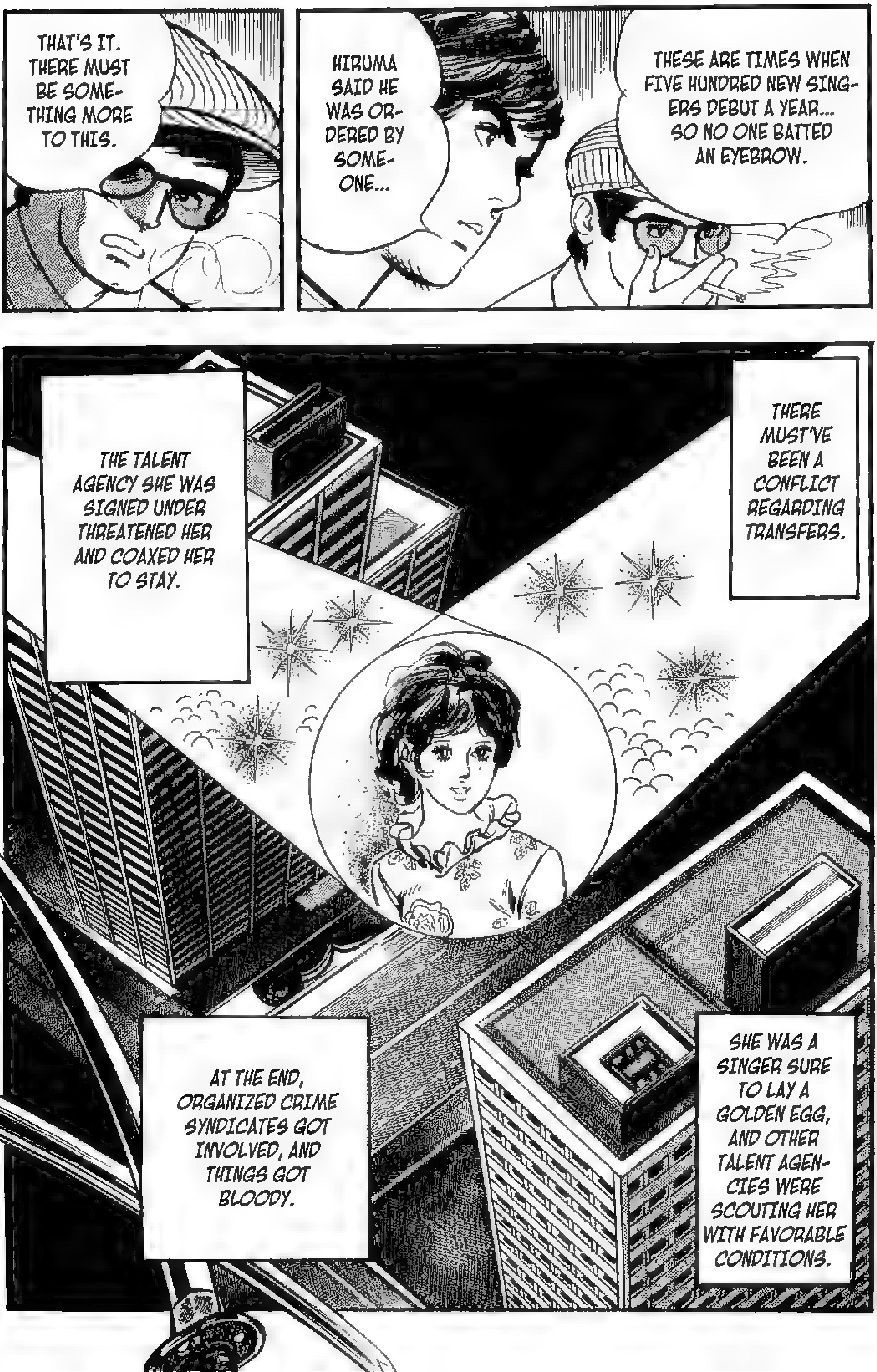

IF WE DIDN'T DO IT, SOMEONE ELSE WOULD...
THAT'S WHY... WE WEREN'T THE ONLY ONES AT FAULT!
IT'S NOT FAIR THAT WE'RE THE ONLY ONES BEING CURSED TO DEATH...
WHO ORDERED YOU TO RAPE MIKI?
THE TIGER! THE TIGER'S HERE!

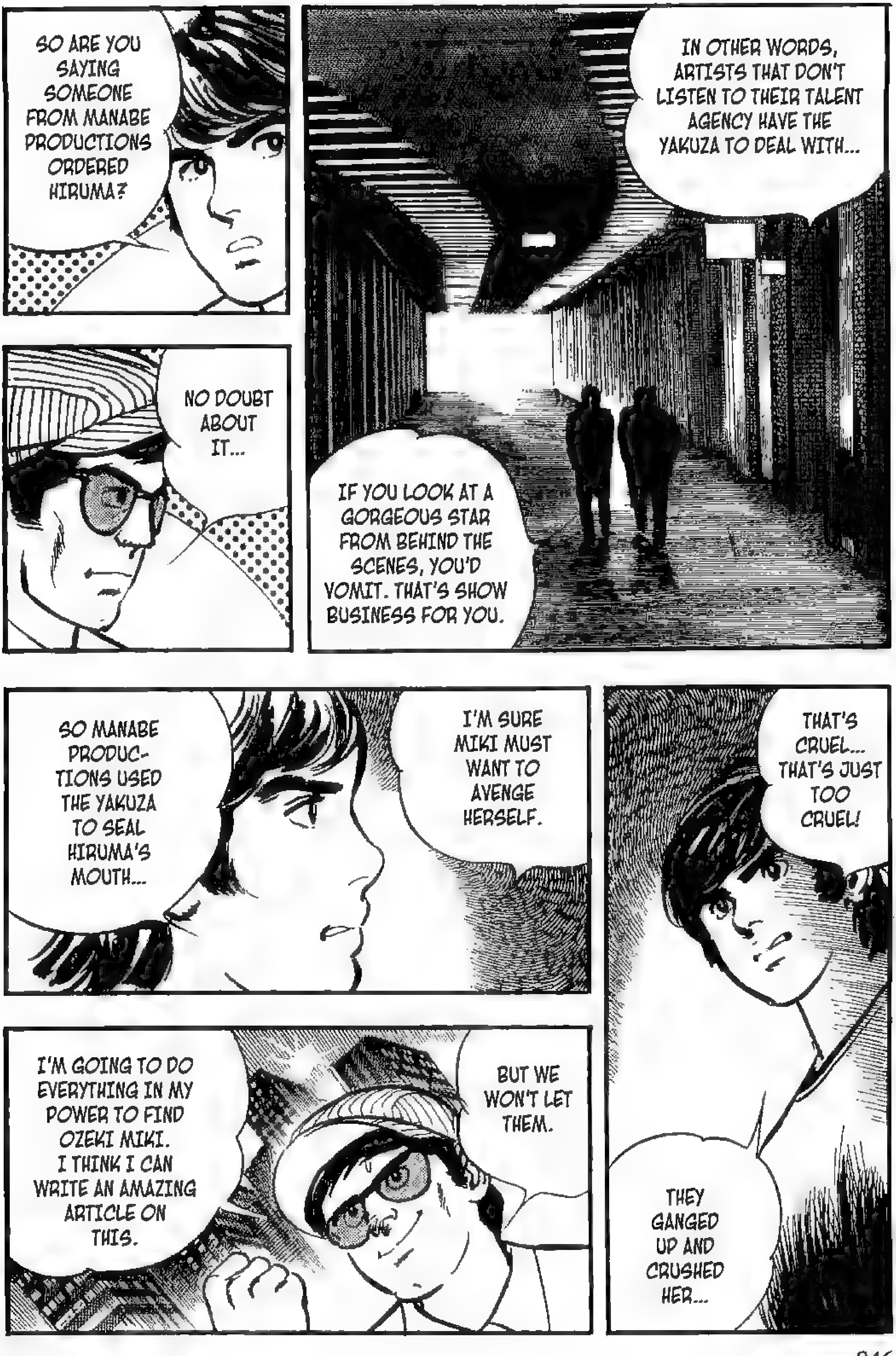

WE'LL TAKE CARE OF OUR BUDDY NOW.
NO OBJECTIONS, RIGHT!?
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING HIM?

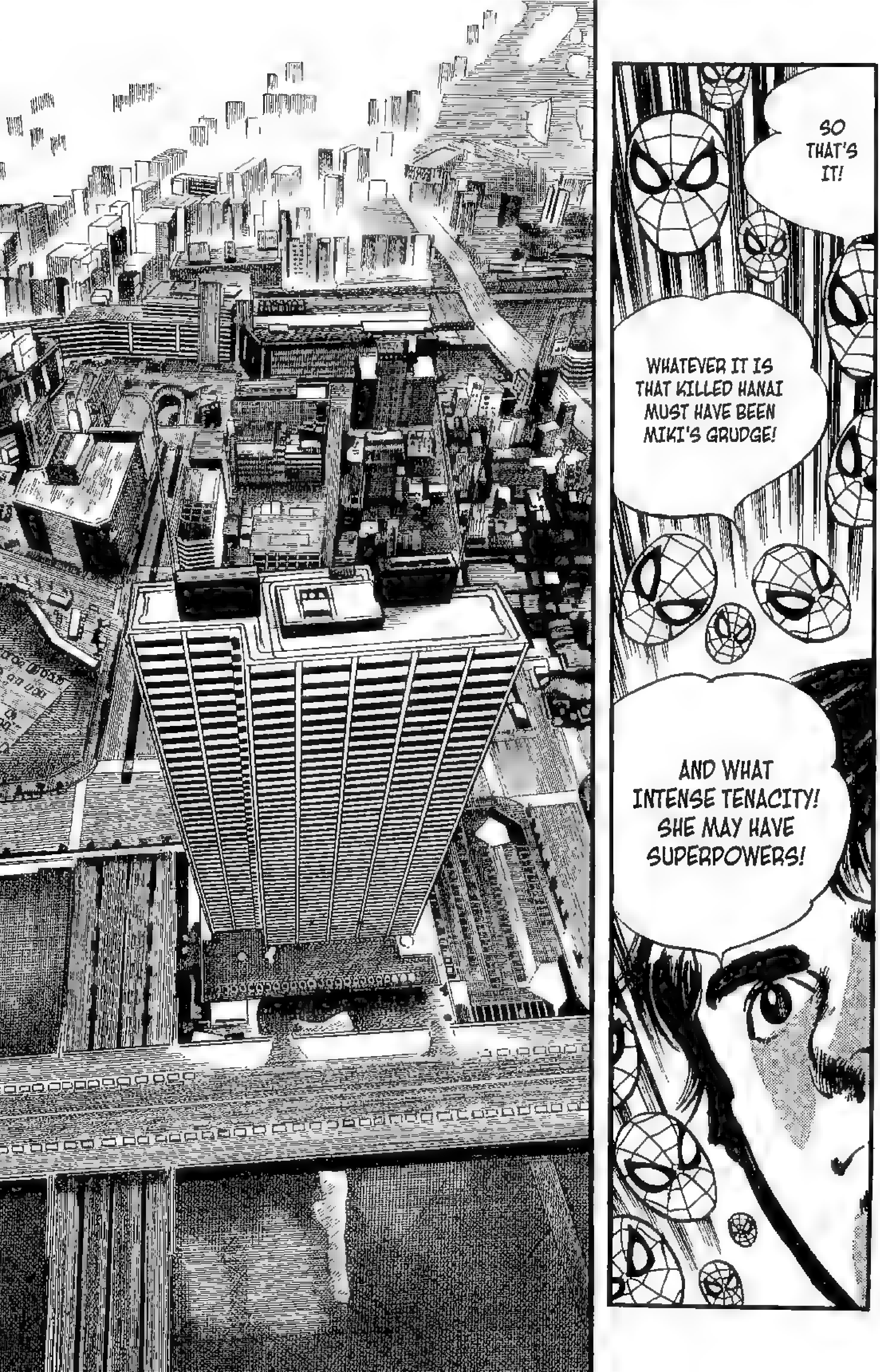

WHAT...?
IS HE REALLY YOUR FRIEND? ISN'T HE RESISTING YOU GUYS?
ARE YOU TRYING TO PICK A FIGHT WITH US, KID?
DON'T BOTHER, KOMORI. LET'S GO.
YOU'RE A REAL IDIOT! THOSE WERE YAKUZA! WEREN'T YOU AFRAID AT ALL...?
WHAT WOULD THE YAKUZA WANT WITH HIRUMA...?
THERE'S A LOT OF SHIT THAT GOES DOWN IN SHOW BUSINESS... BUT AT LEAST I GET THE GIST OF IT.
WHO IS OZEKI MIKI?

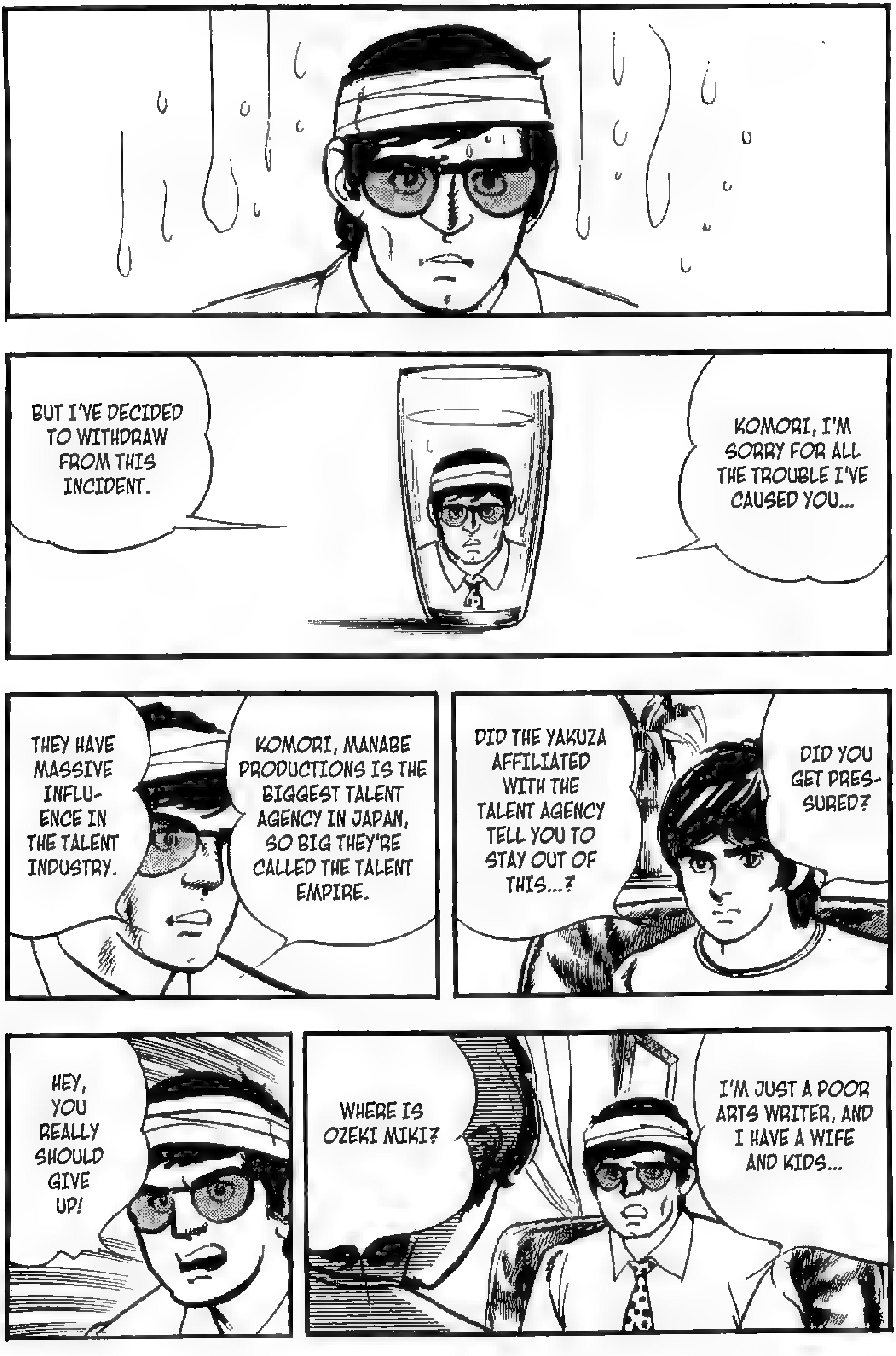

SHE WAS A NEW SINGER FROM THE MANABE TALENT AGENCY.
THE MOBS WERE PART OF THE SAME AGENCY. OZEKI MIKI WAS FAIRLY TALENTED, AND WAS STARTING TO GET HER LUCKY BREAK ...

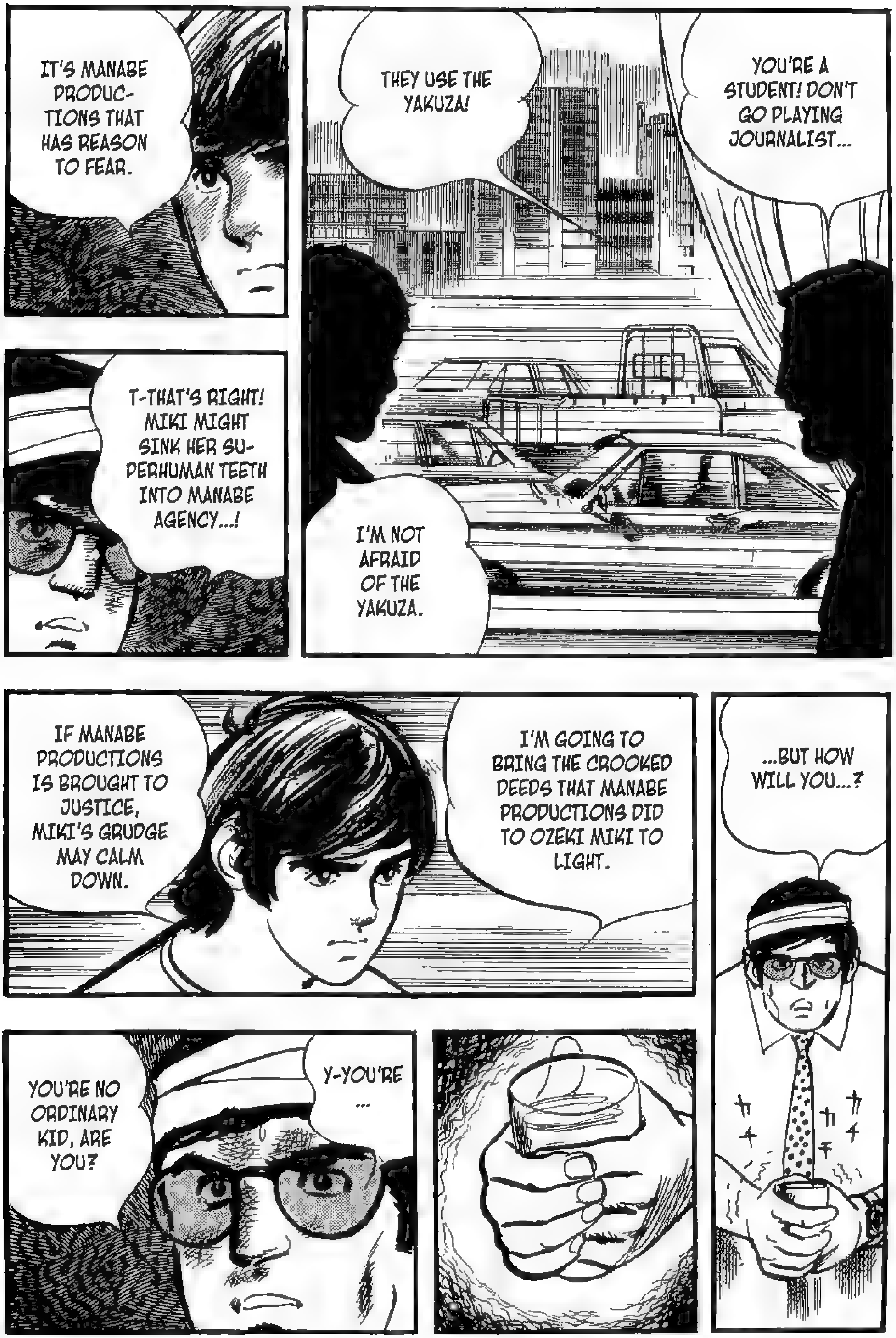

BUT TWO YEARS AGO, SHE WAS RAPED BY THE MOBS AT AN IN WHILE PLAYING A LOCAL CONCERT.
AT THE END OF IT, SHE CAUGHT A SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASE...
THAT RUMOR WAS SPREAD AROUND FOR SOME TIME...
週刊ゴシップ
AND EVENTUALLY, OZEKI MIKI VANISHED FROM THE WORLD OF SHOW BUSINESS...


THESE ARE TIMES WHEN FIVE HUNDRED NEW SINGERS DEBUT A YEAR... SO NO ONE BATTED AN EYEBROW.
HIRUMA SAID HE WAS ORDERED BY SOMEONE...
THAT'S IT. THERE MUST BE SOMETHING MORE TO THIS.
THERE MUST'VE BEEN A CONFLICT REGARDING TRANSFERS.
THE TALENT AGENCY SHE WAS SIGNED UNDER THREATENED HER AND COAXED HER TO STAY.
SHE WAS A SINGER SURE TO LAY A GOLDEN EGG, AND OTHER TALENT AGENCIES WERE SCOUTING HER WITH FAVORABLE CONDITIONS.
AT THE END, ORGANIZED CRIME SYNDICATES GOT INVOLVED, AND THINGS GOT BLOODY.


SO ARE YOU SAYING SOMEONE FROM MANABE PRODUCTIONS ORDERED HIRUMA?
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT...
IN OTHER WORDS, ARTISTS THAT DON'T LISTEN TO THEIR TALENT AGENCY HAVE THE YAKUZA TO DEAL WITH...
IF YOU LOOK AT A GORGEOUS STAR FROM BEHIND THE SCENES, YOU'D VOMIT. THAT'S SHOW BUSINESS FOR YOU.
SO MANABE PRODUCTIONS USED THE YAKUZA TO SEAL HIRUMA'S MOUTH...
I'M SURE MIKI MUST WANT TO AVENGE HERSELF.
THAT'S CRUEL... THAT'S JUST TOO CRUEL!
THEY GANGED UP AND CRUSHED HER...
I'M GOING TO DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO FIND OZEKI MIKI. I THINK I CAN WRITE AN AMAZING ARTICLE ON THIS.
BUT WE WON'T LET THEM.


SO THAT'S IT!
WHATEVER IT IS THAT KILLED HANAI MUST HAVE BEEN MIKI'S GRUDGE!
AND WHAT INTENSE TENACITY! SHE MAY HAVE SUPERPOWERS!


KOMORI, I'M SORRY FOR ALL THE TROUBLE I'VE CAUSED YOU...
BUT I'VE DECIDED TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS INCIDENT.
DID YOU GET PRESSURED?
DID THE YAKUZA AFFILIATED WITH THE TALENT AGENCY TELL YOU TO STAY OUT OF THIS...?
KOMORI, MANABE PRODUCTIONS IS THE BIGGEST TALENT AGENCY IN JAPAN, SO BIG THEY'RE CALLED THE TALENT EMPIRE.
THEY HAVE MASSIVE INFLUENCE IN THE TALENT INDUSTRY.
I'M JUST A POOR ARTS WRITER, AND I HAVE A WIFE AND KIDS...
WHERE IS OZEKI MIKI?
HEY, YOU REALLY SHOULD GIVE UP!


IT'S MANABE PRODUCTIONS THAT HAS REASON TO FEAR.
T-THAT'S RIGHT! MIKI MIGHT SINK HER SUPERHUMAN TEETH INTO MANABE AGENCY...!
THEY USE THE YAKUZA!
YOU'RE A STUDENT! DON'T GO PLAYING JOURNALIST...
I'M NOT AFRAID OF THE YAKUZA.
IF MANABE PRODUCTIONS IS BROUGHT TO JUSTICE, MIKI'S GRUDGE MAY CALM DOWN.
I'M GOING TO BRING THE CROOKED DEEDS THAT MANABE PRODUCTIONS DID TO OZEKI MIKI TO LIGHT.
...BUT HOW WILL YOU...?
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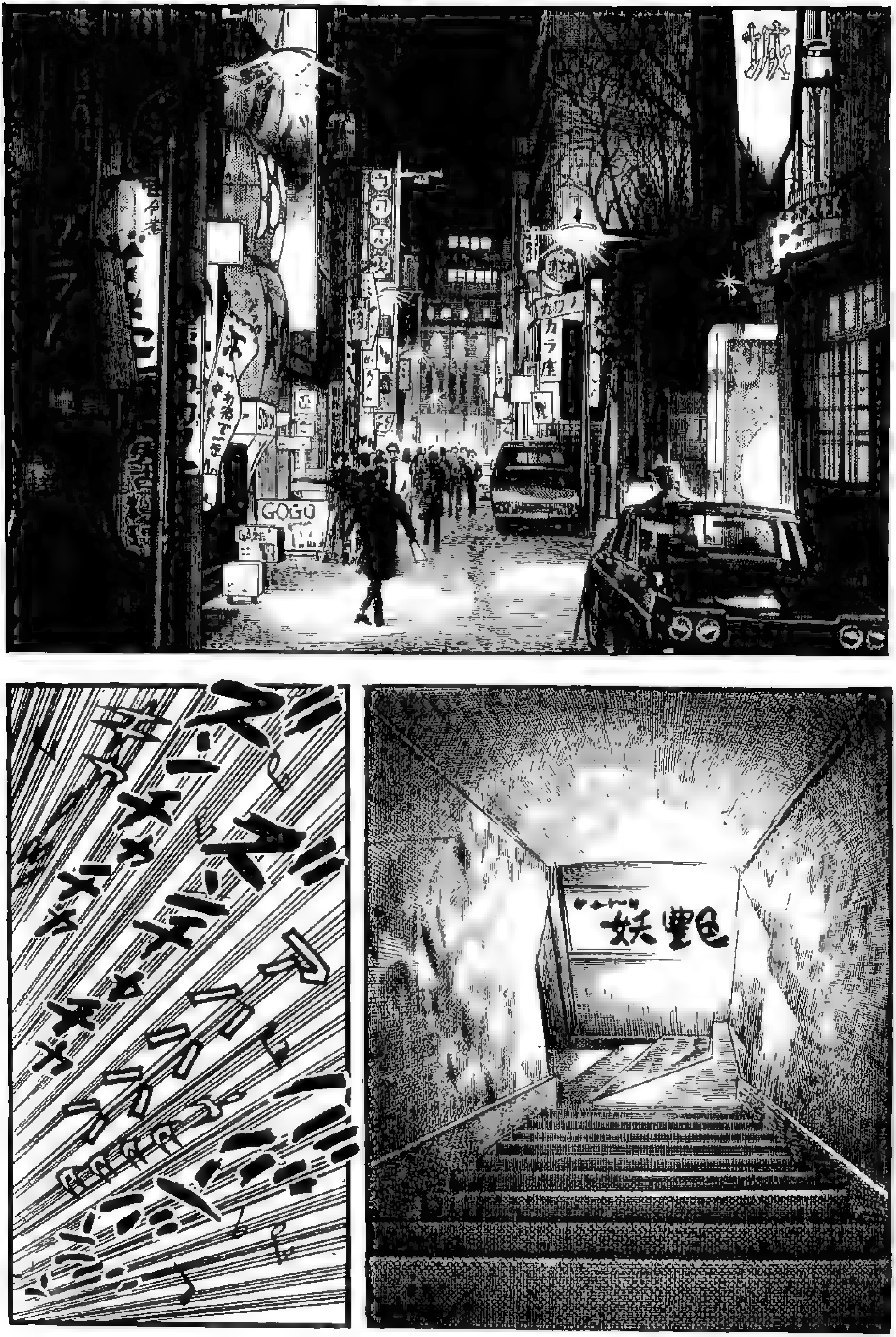
Y-YOU'RE ...
YOU'RE NO ORDINARY KID, ARE YOU?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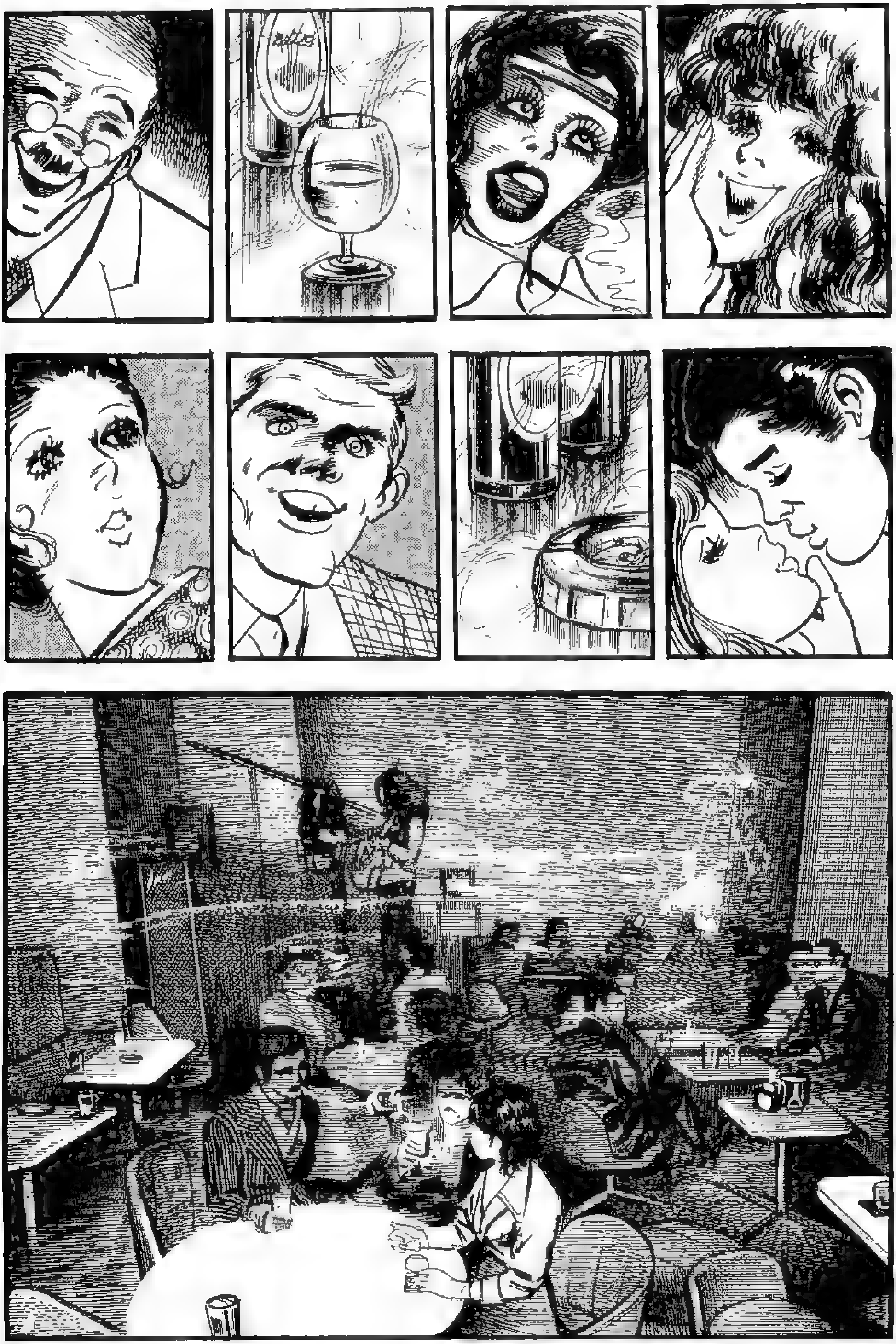
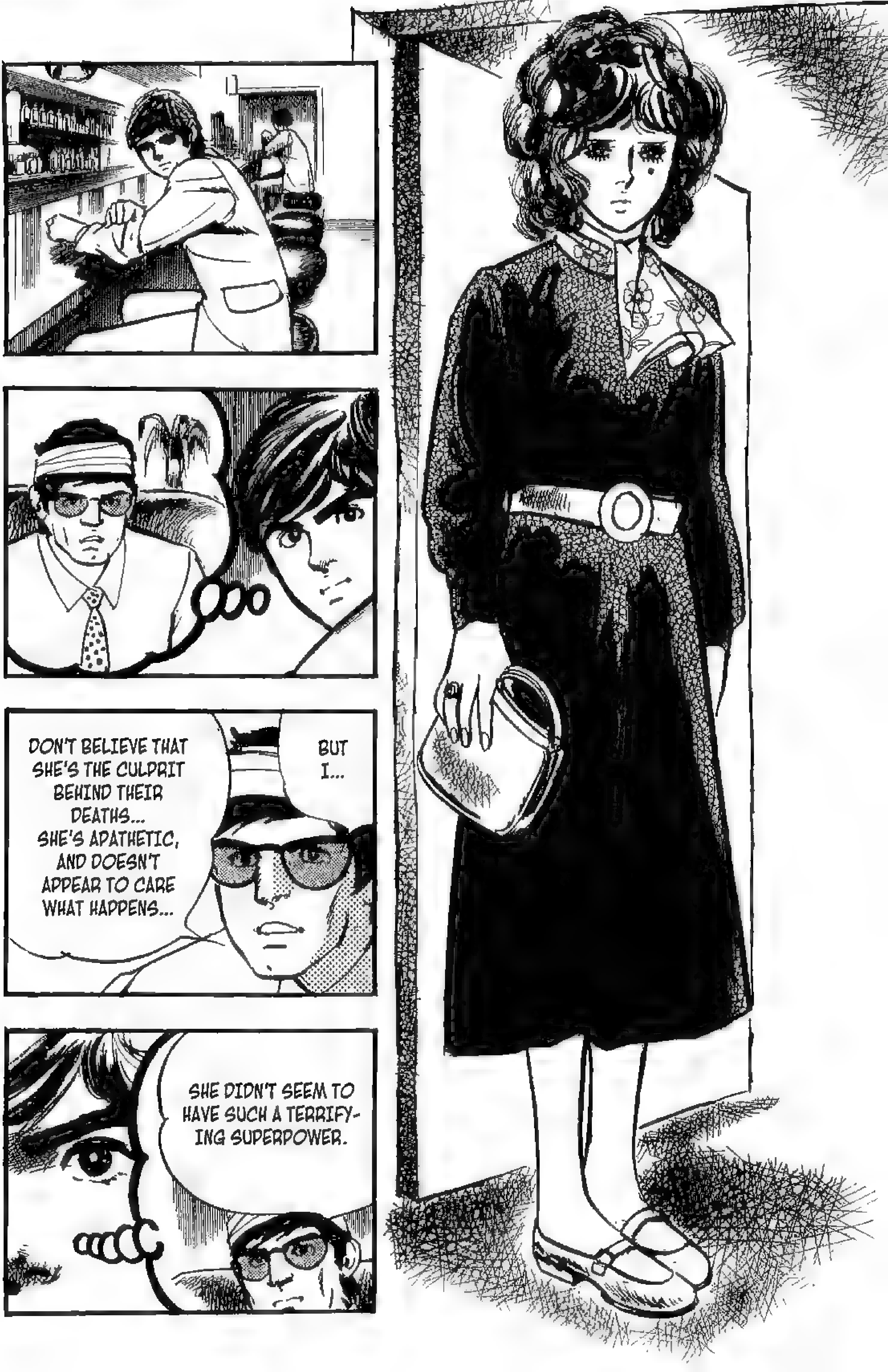
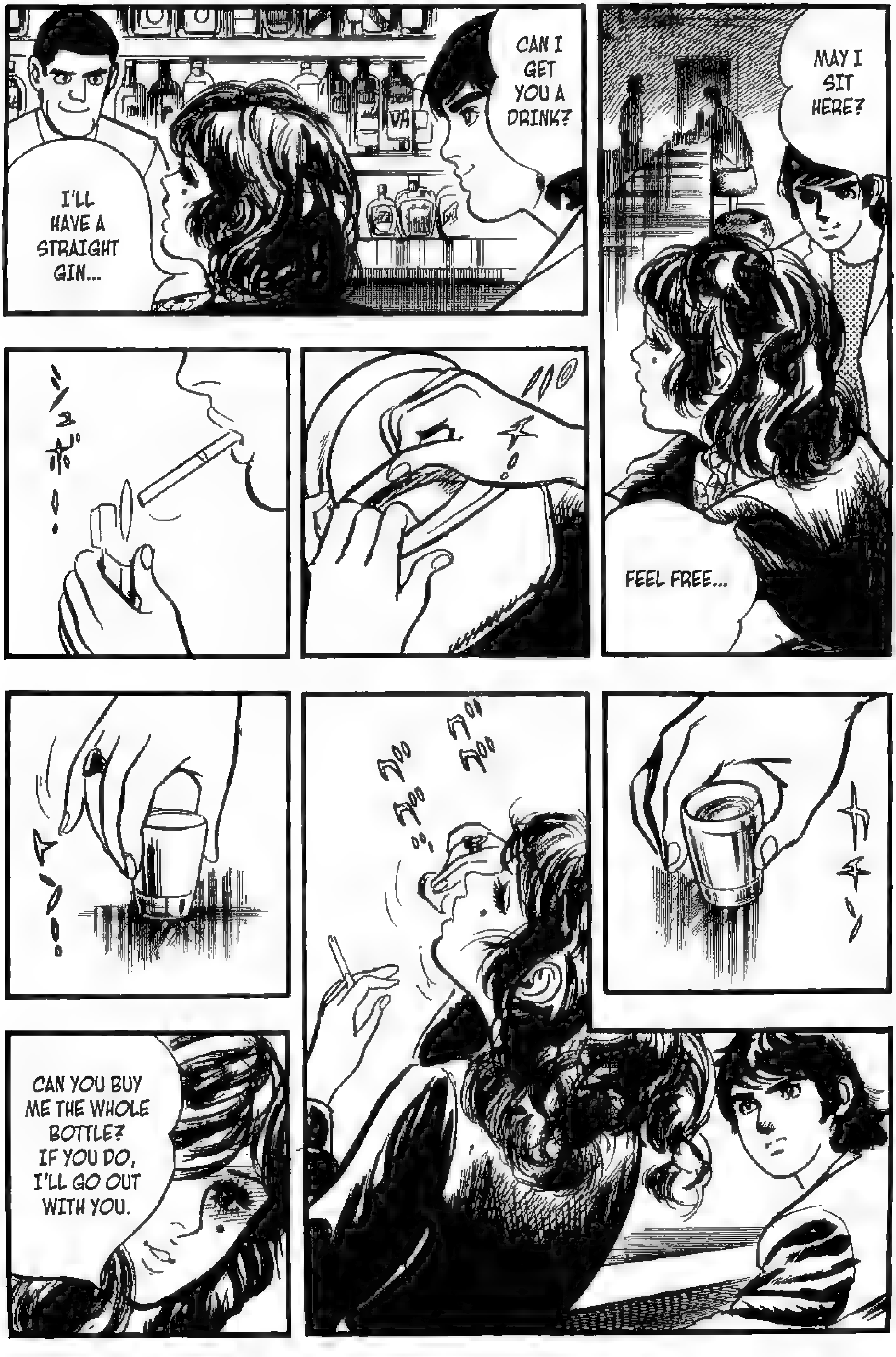



BUT I...
DON'T BELIEVE THAT SHE'S THE CULPRIT BEHIND THEIR DEATHS... SHE'S APATHETIC, AND DOESN'T APPEAR TO CARE WHAT HAPPENS...
SHE DIDN'T SEEM TO HAVE SUCH A TERRIFYING SUPERPOWER.


MAY I SIT HERE?
FEEL FREE...
CAN I GET YOU A DRINK?
I'LL HAVE A STRAIGHT GIN...
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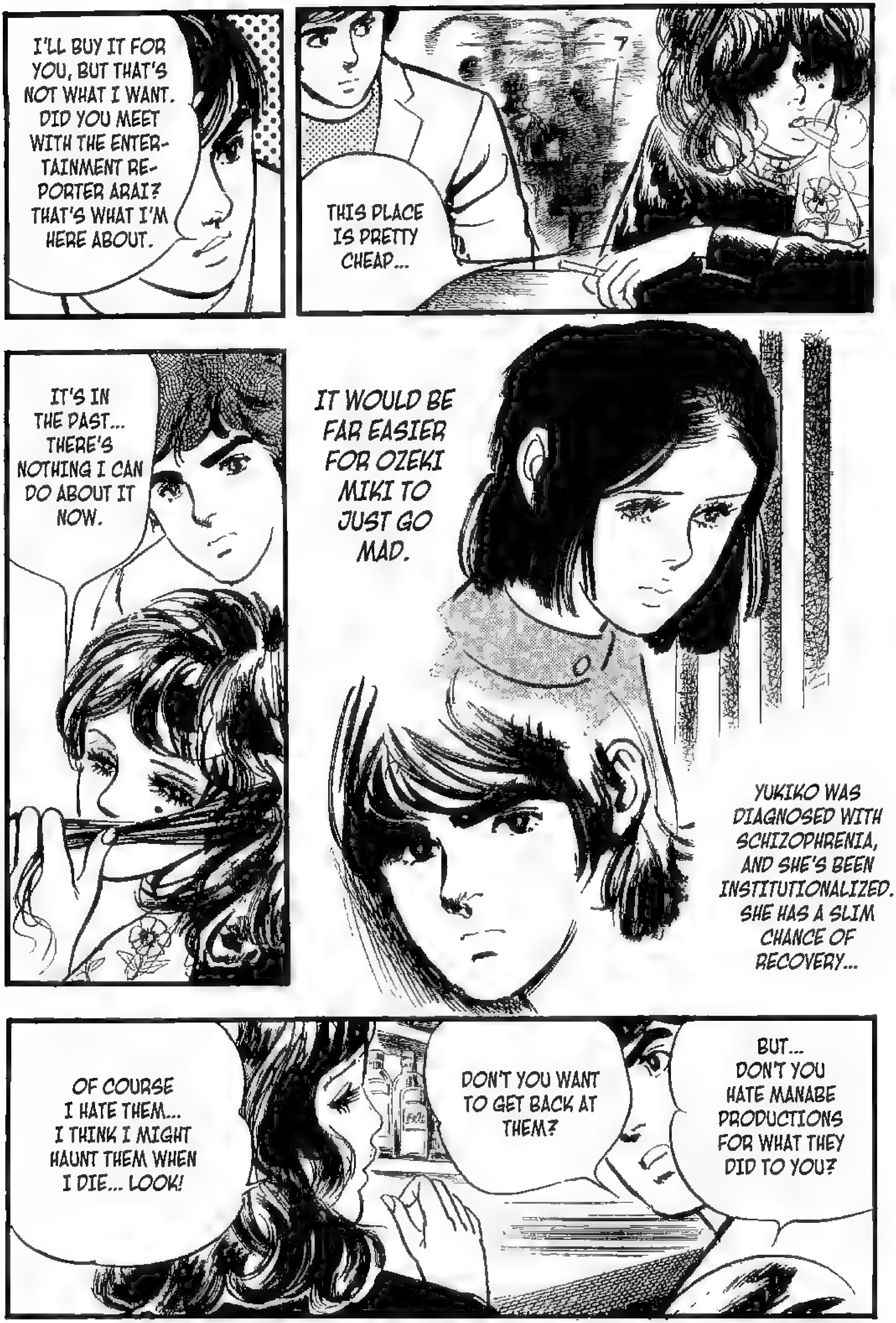
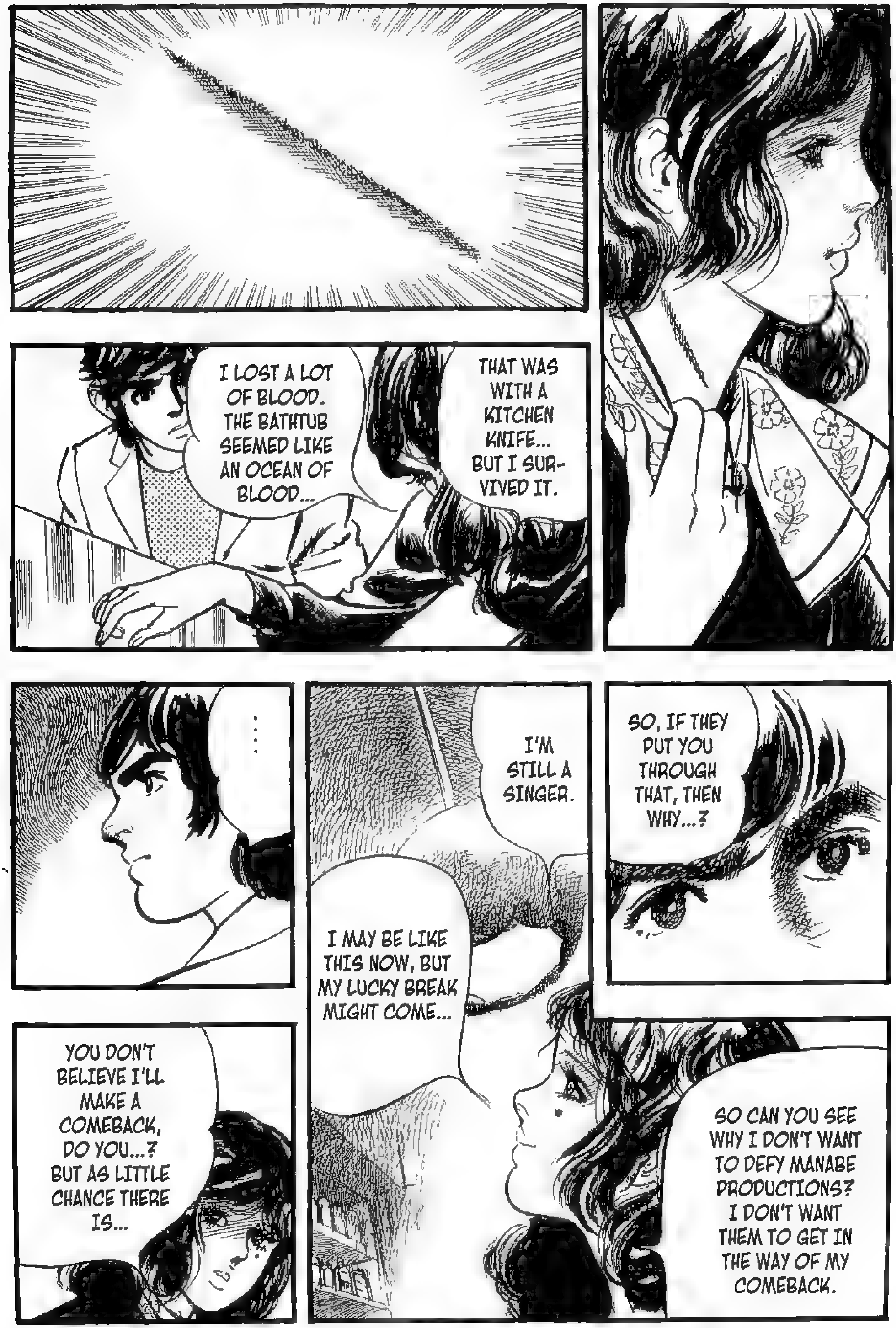
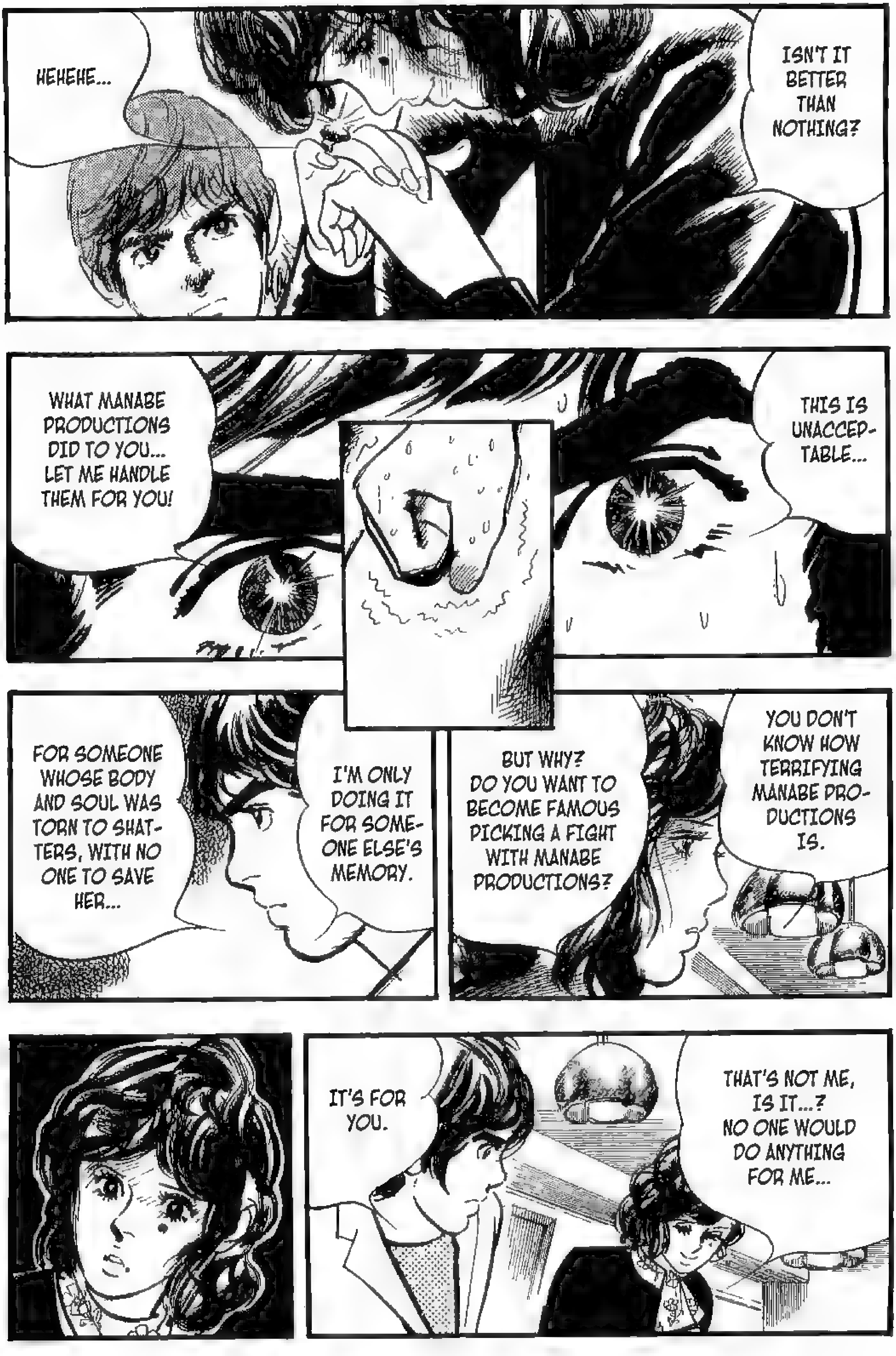
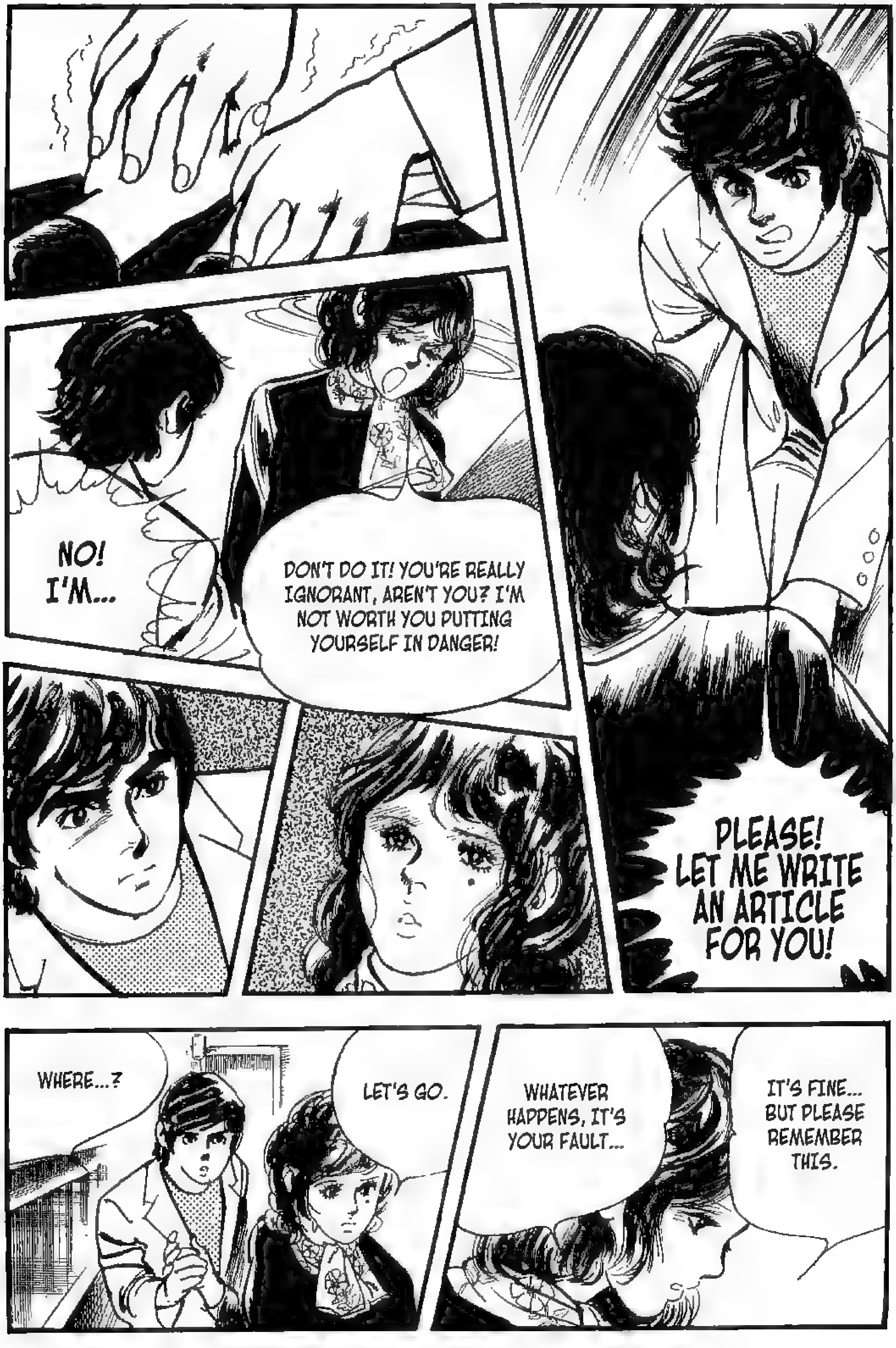
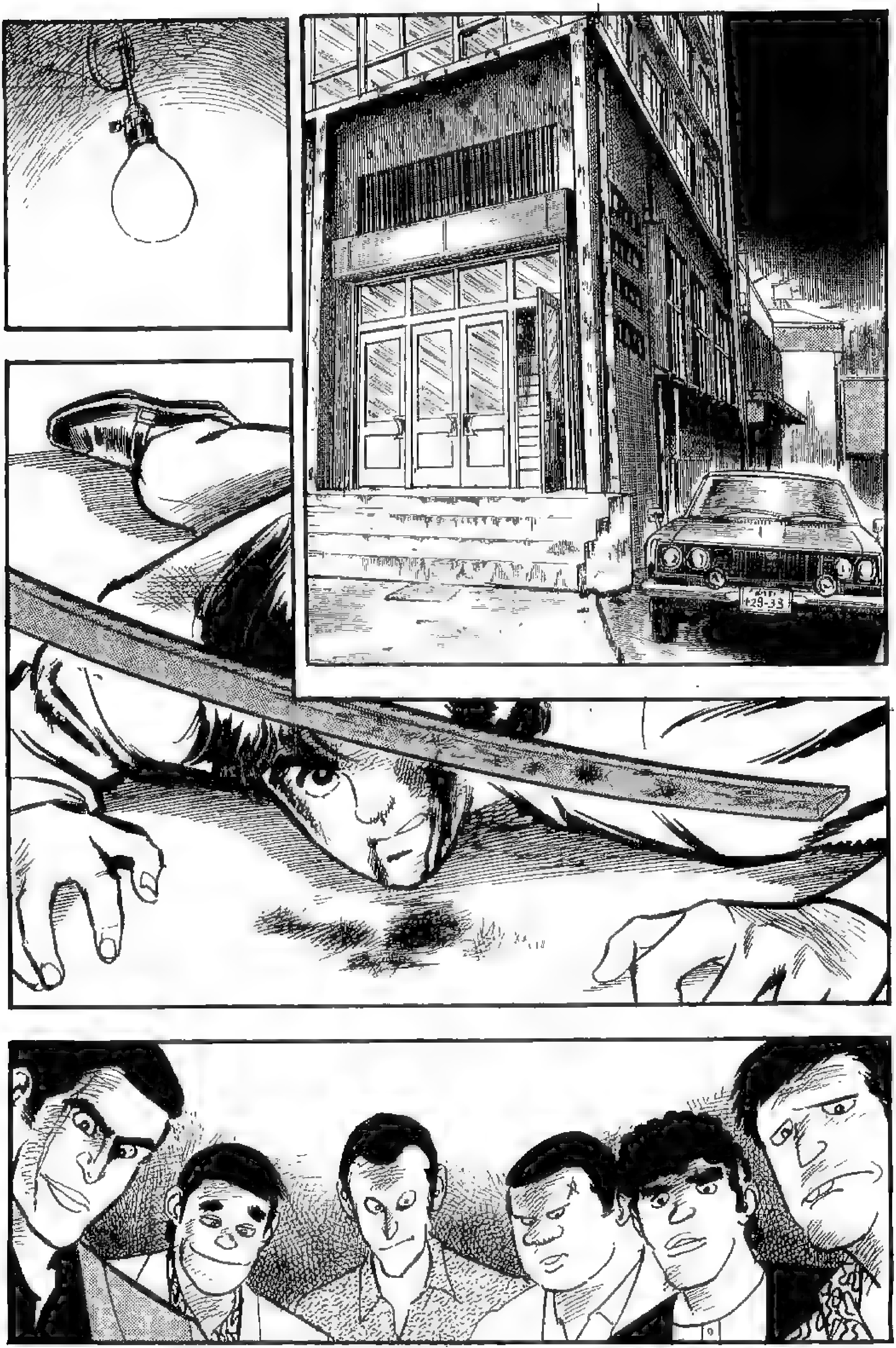
CAN YOU BUY ME THE WHOLE BOTTLE? IF YOU DO, I'LL GO OUT WITH YOU.


THIS PLACE IS PRETTY CHEAP...
I'LL BUY IT FOR YOU, BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT. DID YOU MEET WITH THE ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER ARAI? THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE ABOUT.
IT'S IN THE PAST... THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT NOW.
IT WOULD BE FAR EASIER FOR OZEKI MIKI TO JUST GO MAD.
YUKIKO WAS DIAGNOSED WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA, AND SHE'S BEEN INSTITUTIONALIZED. SHE HAS A SLIM CHANCE OF RECOVERY...
BUT... DON'T YOU HATE MANABE PRODUCTIONS FOR WHAT THEY DID TO YOU?
DON'T YOU WANT TO GET BACK AT THEM?
OF COURSE I HATE THEM... I THINK I MIGHT HAUNT THEM WHEN I DIE... LOOK!


THAT WAS WITH A KITCHEN KNIFE... BUT I SURVIVED IT.
I LOST A LOT OF BLOOD. THE BATHTUB SEEMED LIKE AN OCEAN OF BLOOD...
SO, IF THEY PUT YOU THROUGH THAT, THEN WHY...?
I'M STILL A SINGER.
I MAY BE LIKE THIS NOW, BUT MY LUCKY BREAK MIGHT COME...
....
SO CAN YOU SEE WHY I DON'T WANT TO DEFY MANABE PRODUCTIONS? I DON'T WANT THEM TO GET IN THE WAY OF MY COMEBACK.
YOU DON'T BELIEVE I'LL MAKE A COMEBACK, DO YOU...? BUT AS LITTLE CHANCE THERE IS...


ISN'T IT BETTER THAN NOTHING?
HEHEHE...
THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE...
WHAT MANABE PRODUCTIONS DID TO YOU... LET ME HANDLE THEM FOR YOU!
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TERRIFYING MANABE PRODUCTIONS IS.
BUT WHY? DO YOU WANT TO BECOME FAMOUS PICKING A FIGHT WITH MANABE PRODUCTIONS?
I'M ONLY DOING IT FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S MEMORY.
FOR SOMEONE WHOSE BODY AND SOUL WAS TORN TO SHATTERS, WITH NO ONE TO SAVE HER...
THAT'S NOT ME, IS IT...? NO ONE WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR ME...
IT'S FOR YOU.


PLEASE! LET ME WRITE AN ARTICLE FOR YOU!
DON'T DO IT! YOU'RE REALLY IGNORANT, AREN'T YOU? I'M NOT WORTH YOU PUTTING YOURSELF IN DANGER!
NO! I'M...
IT'S FINE... BUT PLEASE REMEMBER THIS.
WHATEVER HAPPENS, IT'S YOUR FAULT...
LET'S GO.
WHERE...?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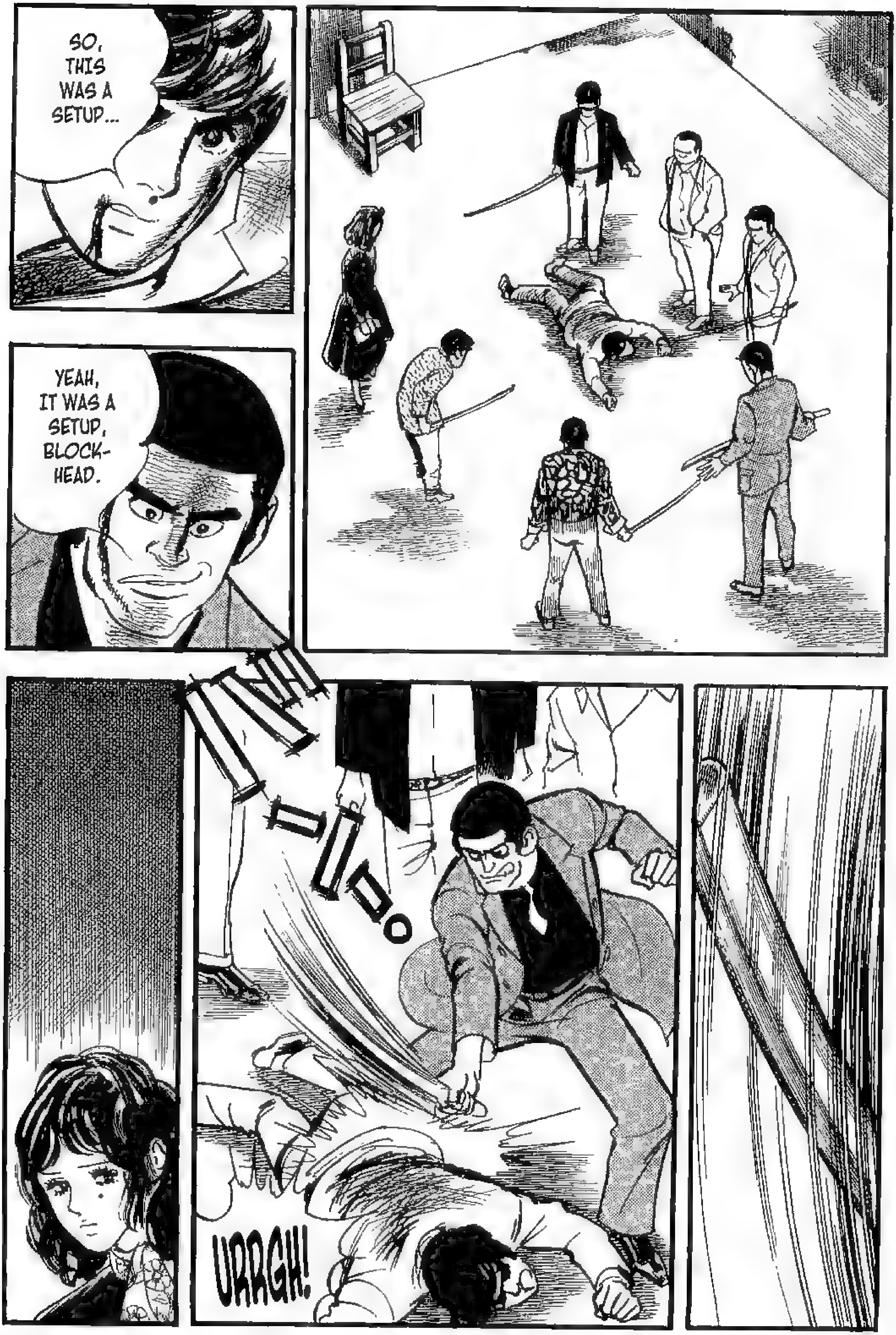
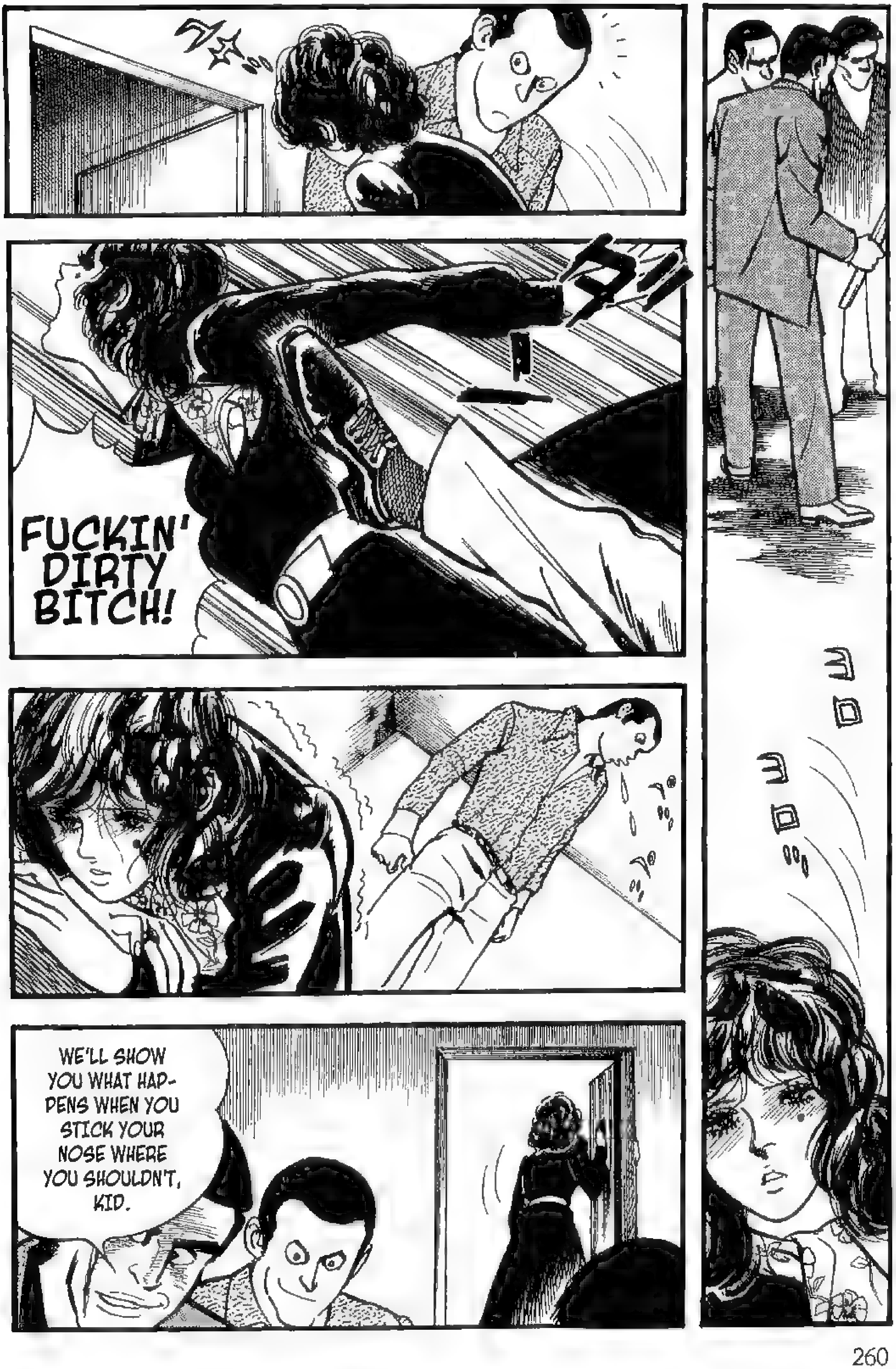

SO, THIS WAS A SETUP...
YEAH, IT WAS A SETUP, BLOCKHEAD.
URRGH!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FUCKIN' DIRTY BITCH!
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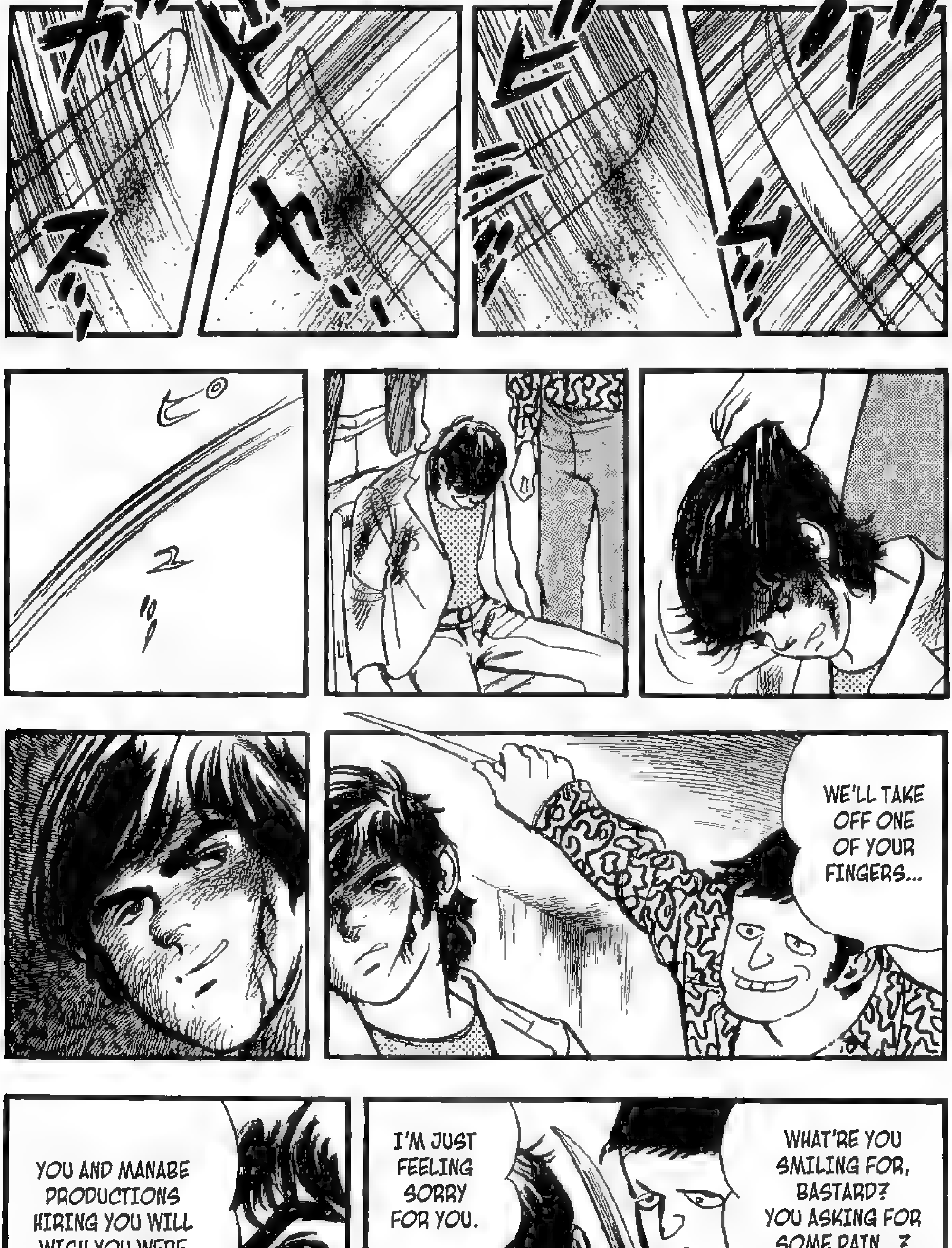
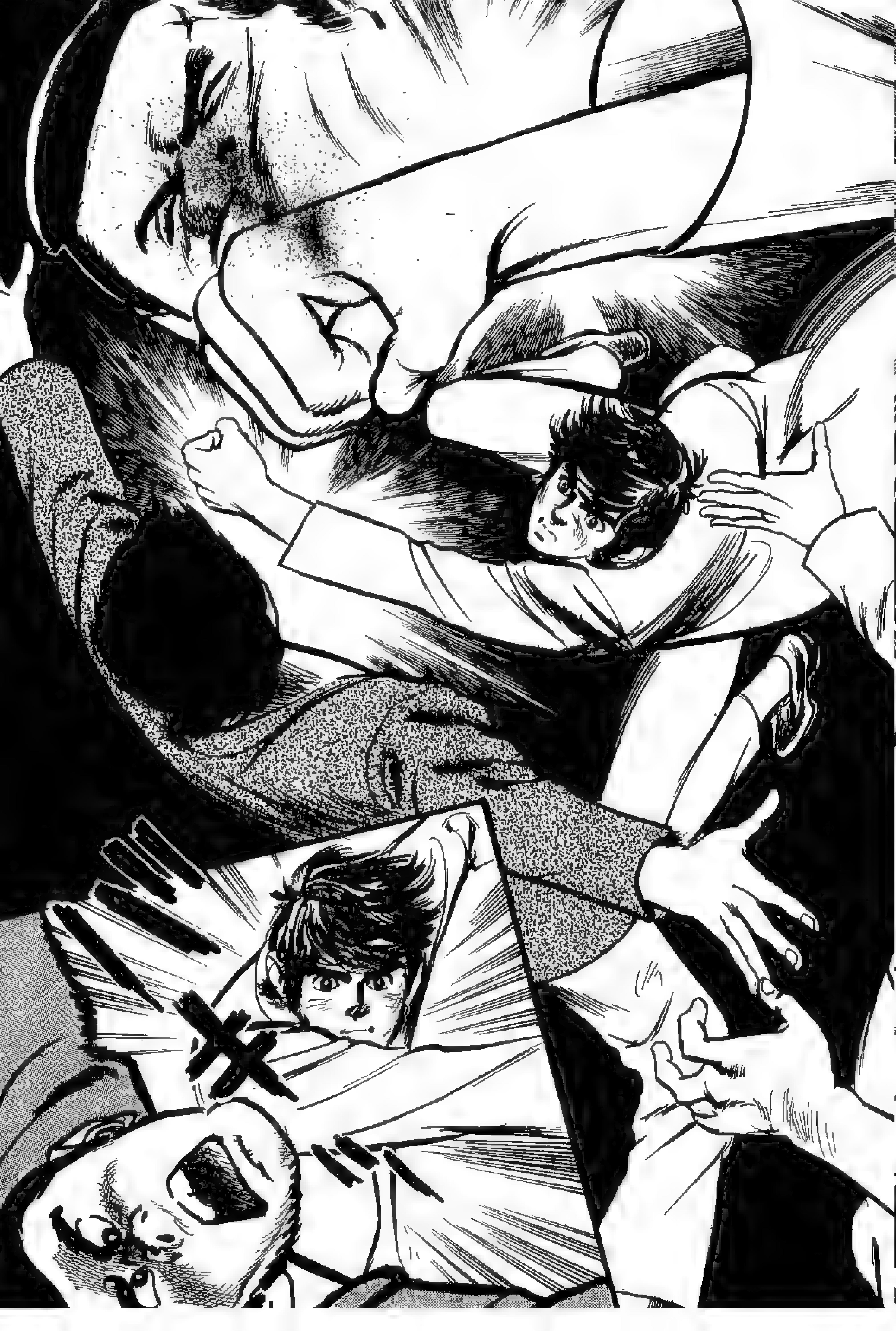
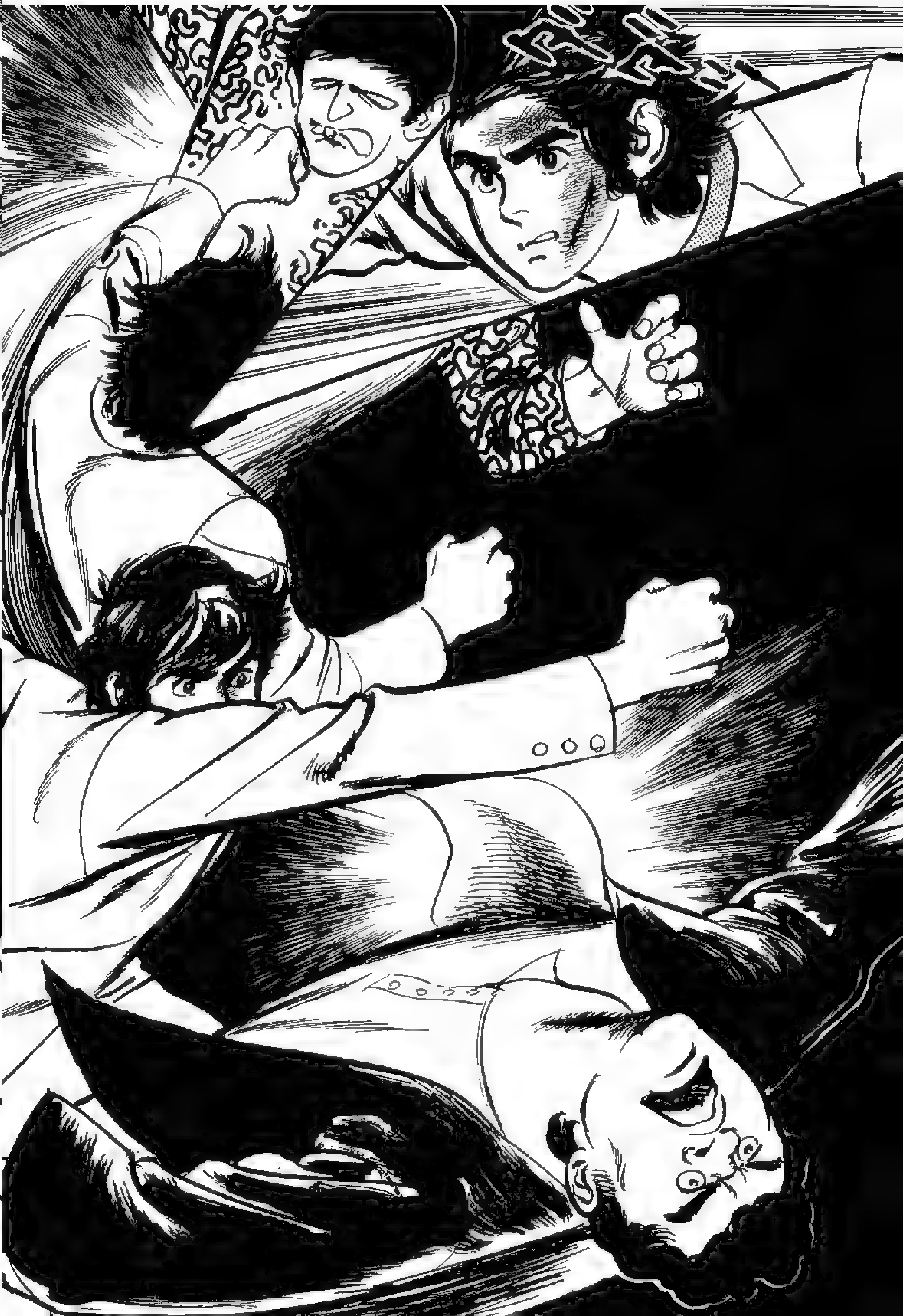
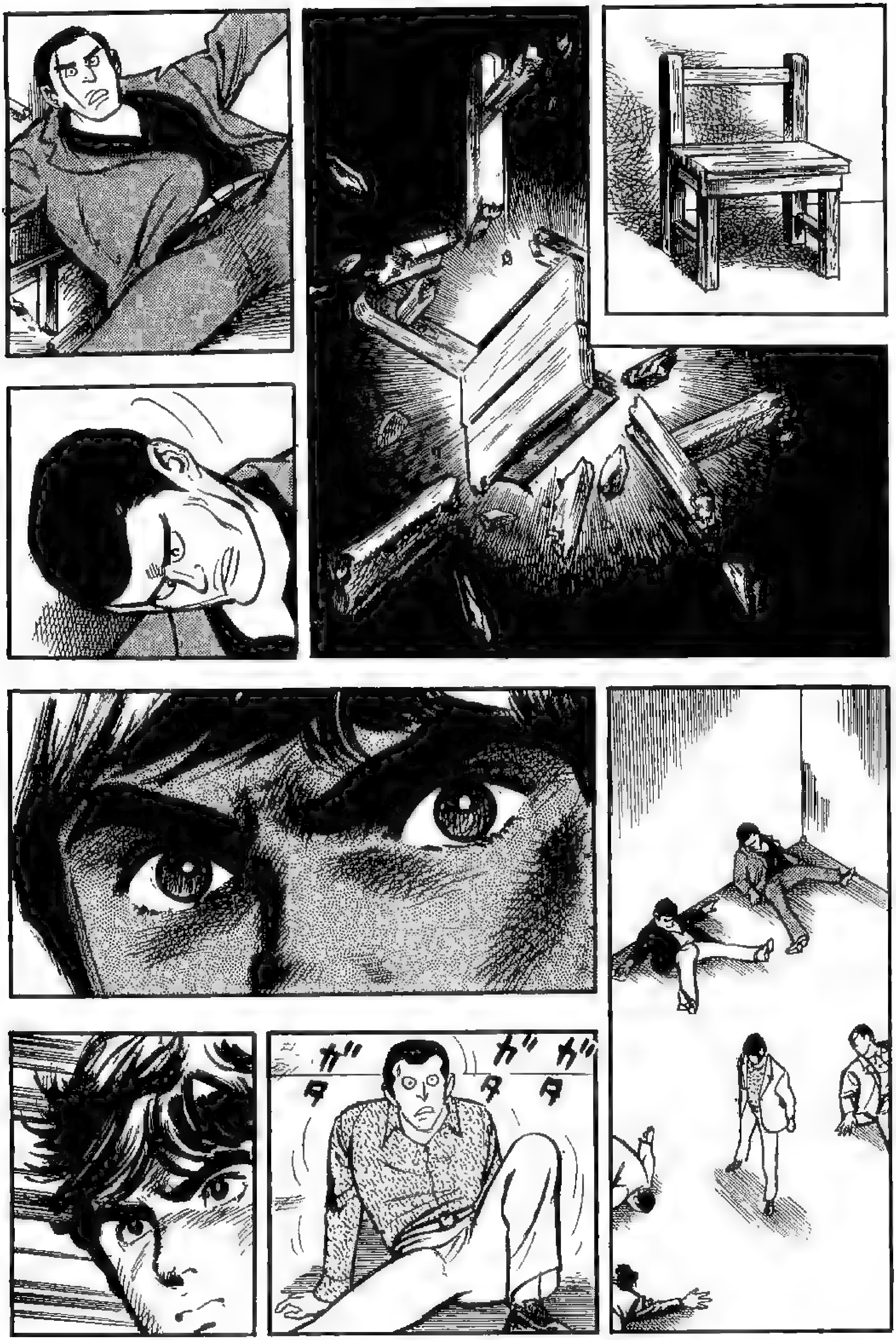
WE'LL SHOW YOU WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU STICK YOUR NOSE WHERE YOU SHOULDN'T, KID.


WE'LL TAKE OFF ONE OF YOUR FINGERS...
YOU AND MANABE PRODUCTIONS HIRING YOU WILL WISH YOU WERE DEAD.
WHAT'RE YOU SMILING FOR, BASTARD? YOU ASKING FOR SOME PAIN...?
I'M JUST FEELING SORRY FOR YOU.



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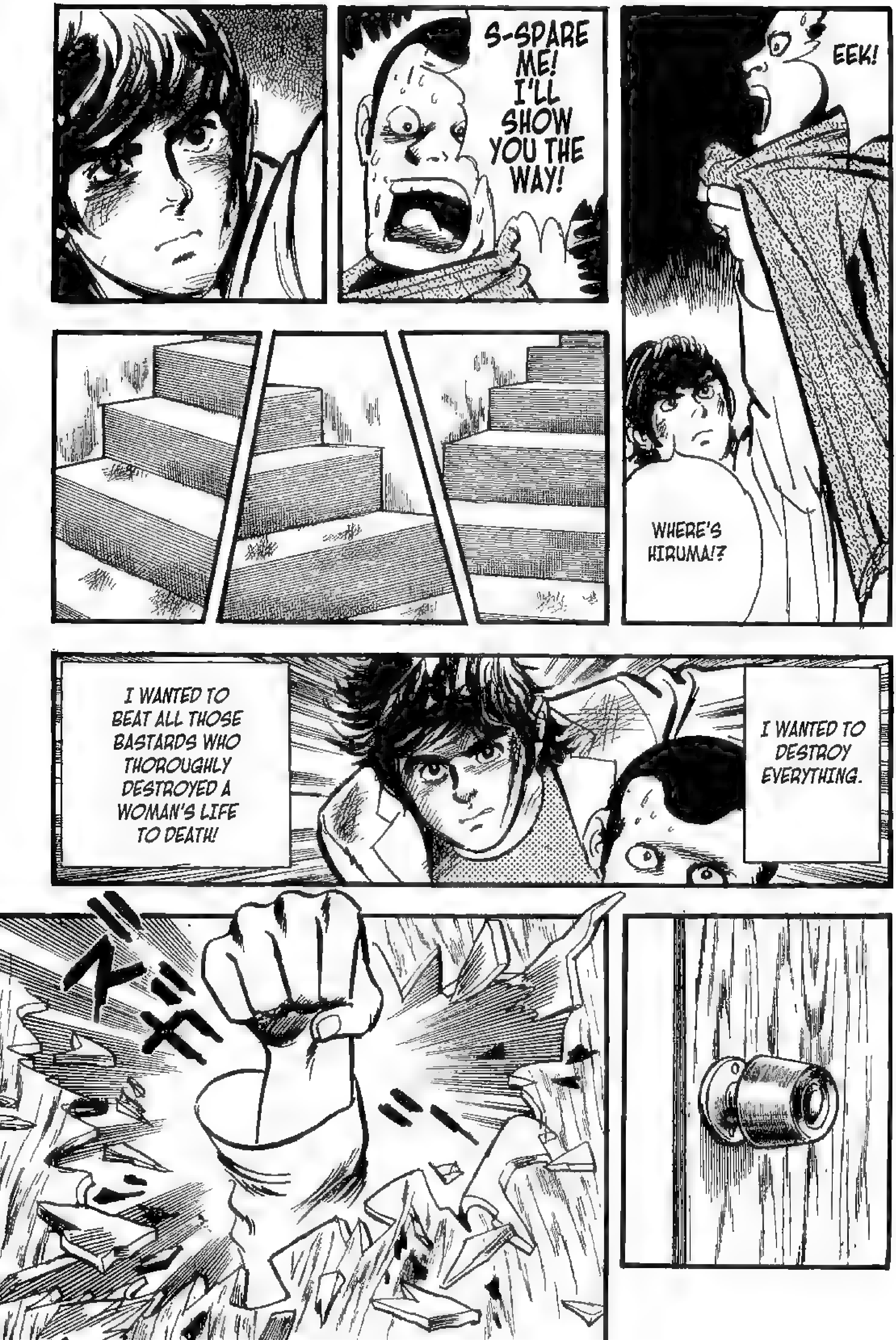
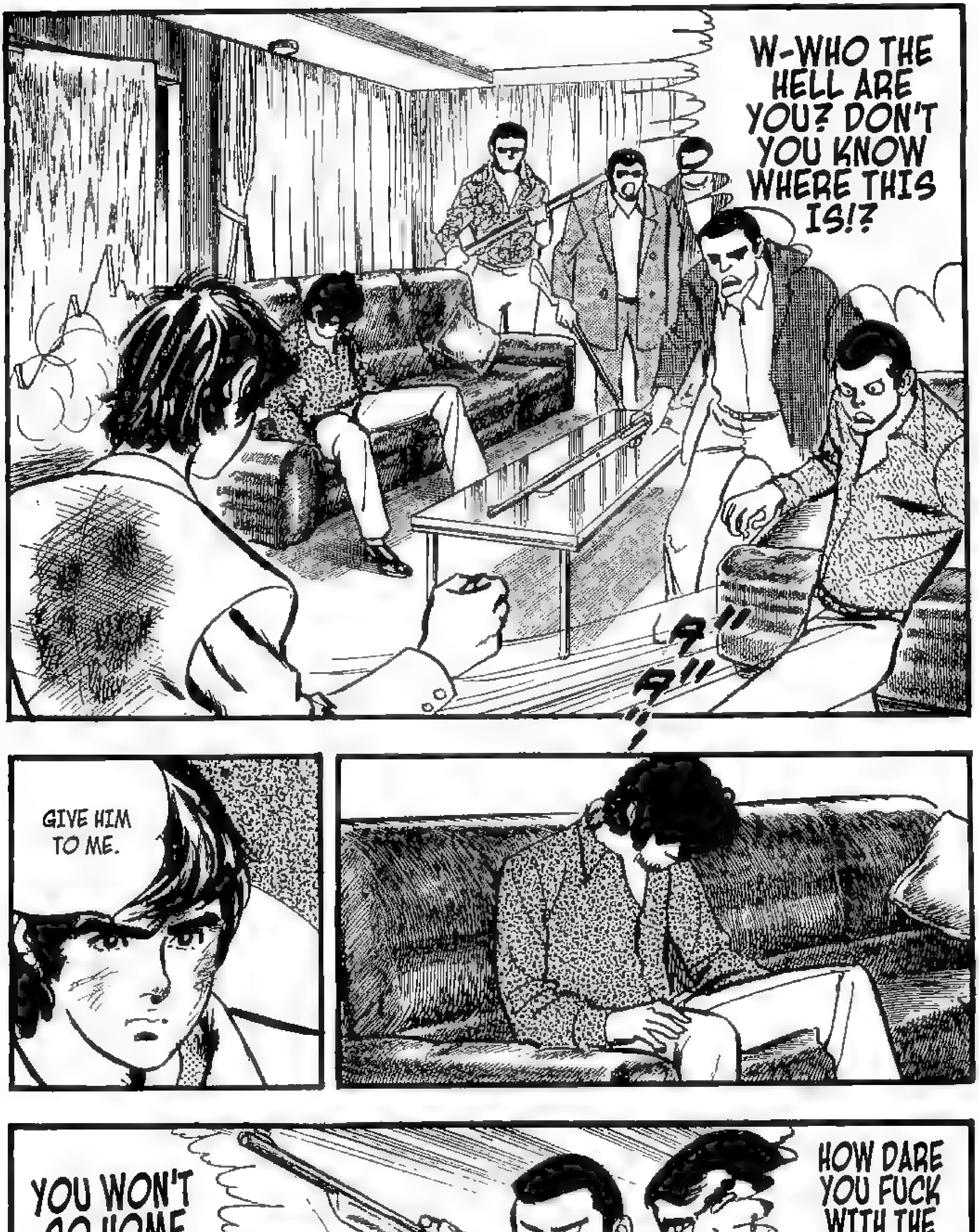
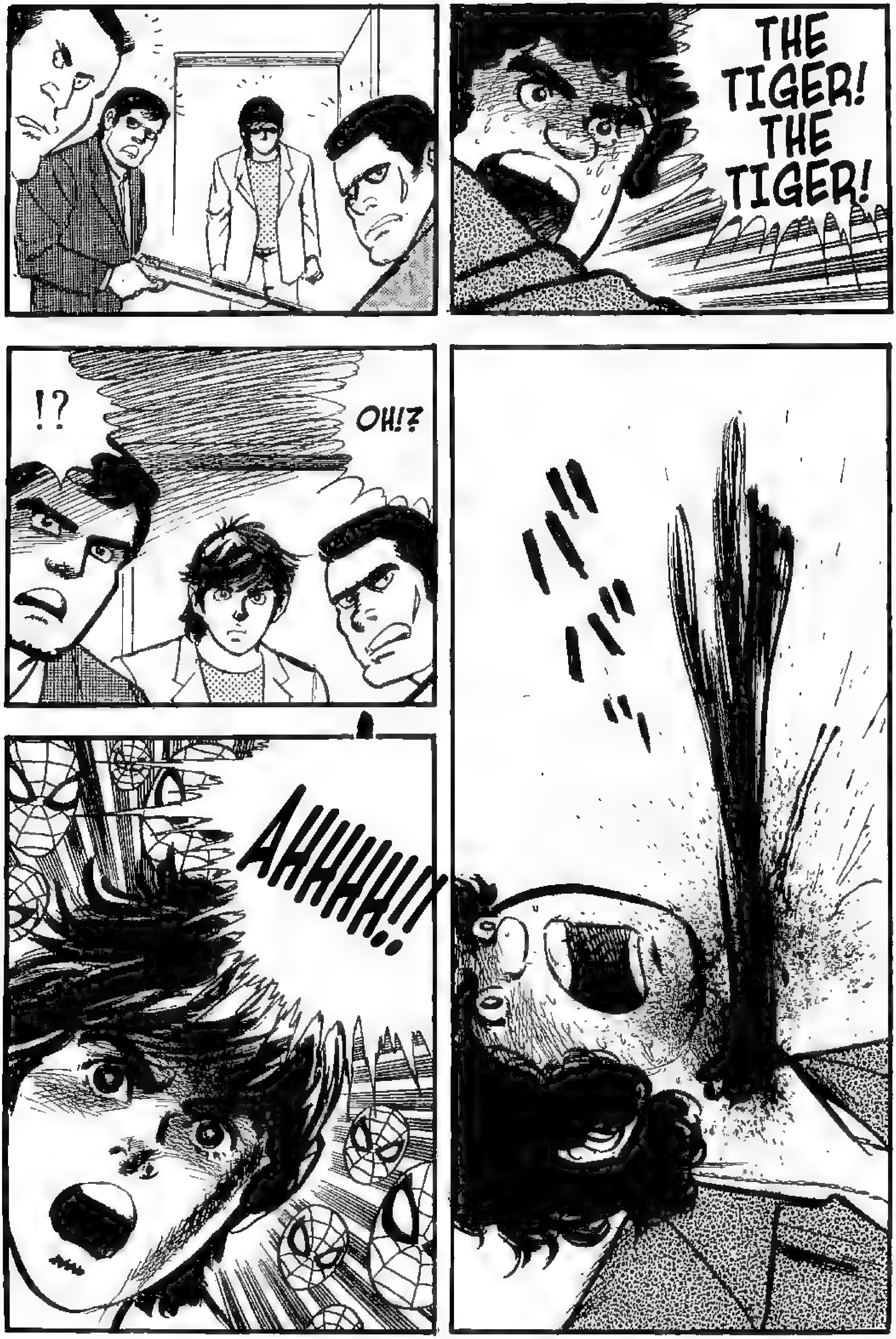
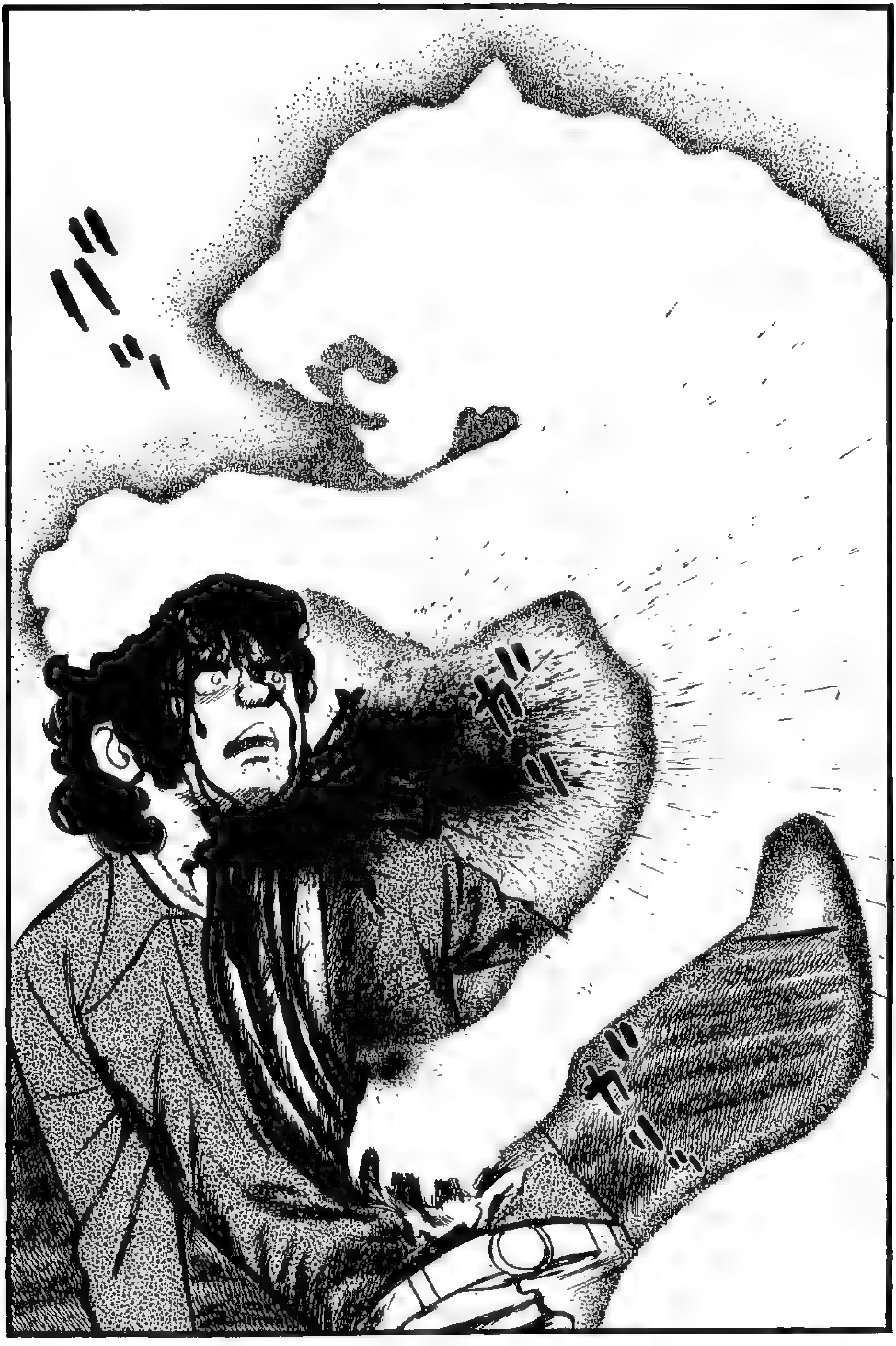

EEK!
WHERE'S HIRUMA!?
S-SPARE ME! I'LL SHOW YOU THE WAY!
I WANTED TO DESTROY EVERYTHING.
I WANTED TO BEAT ALL THOSE BASTARDS WHO THOROUGHLY DESTROYED A WOMAN'S LIFE TO DEATH!


W-WHO THE HELL ARE YOU!? DON'T YOU KNOW WHERE THIS IS!?
GIVE HIM TO ME.
HOW DARE YOU FUCK WITH THE TSUKAHARA GROUP, ASSHOLE!
YOU WON'T GO HOME ALIVE!


THE TIGER! THE TIGER!
OH!?
!?
AHHHH!!!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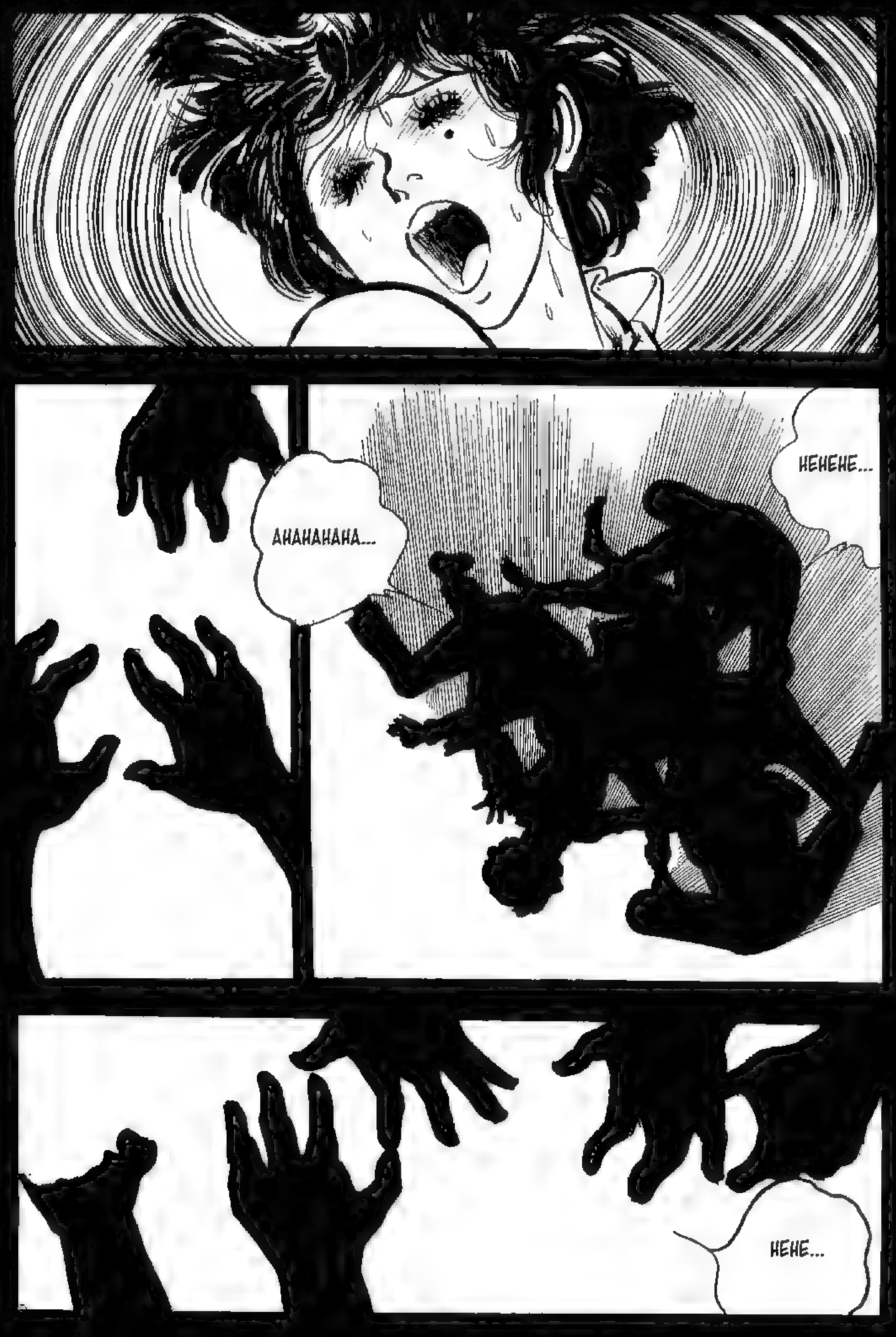
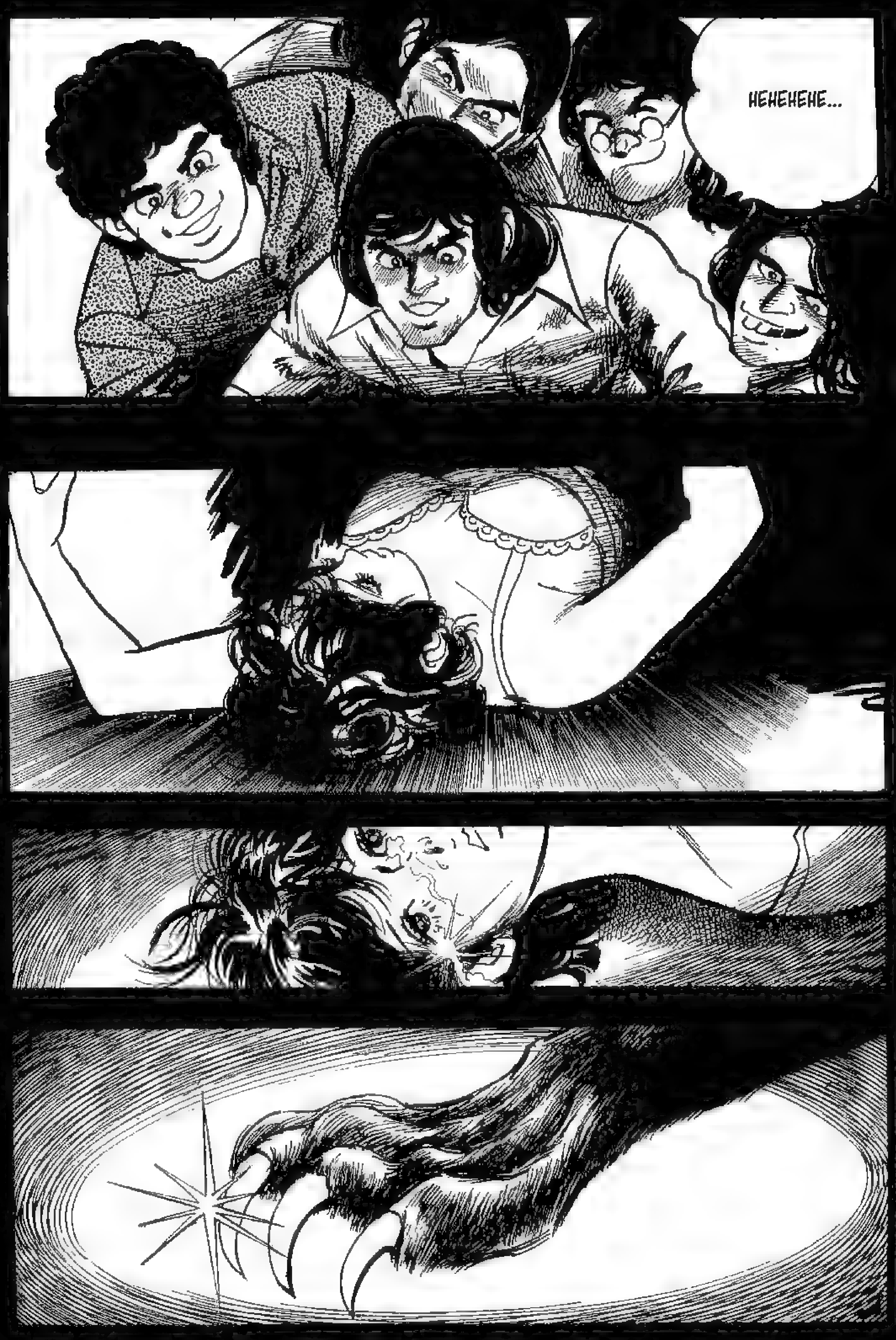
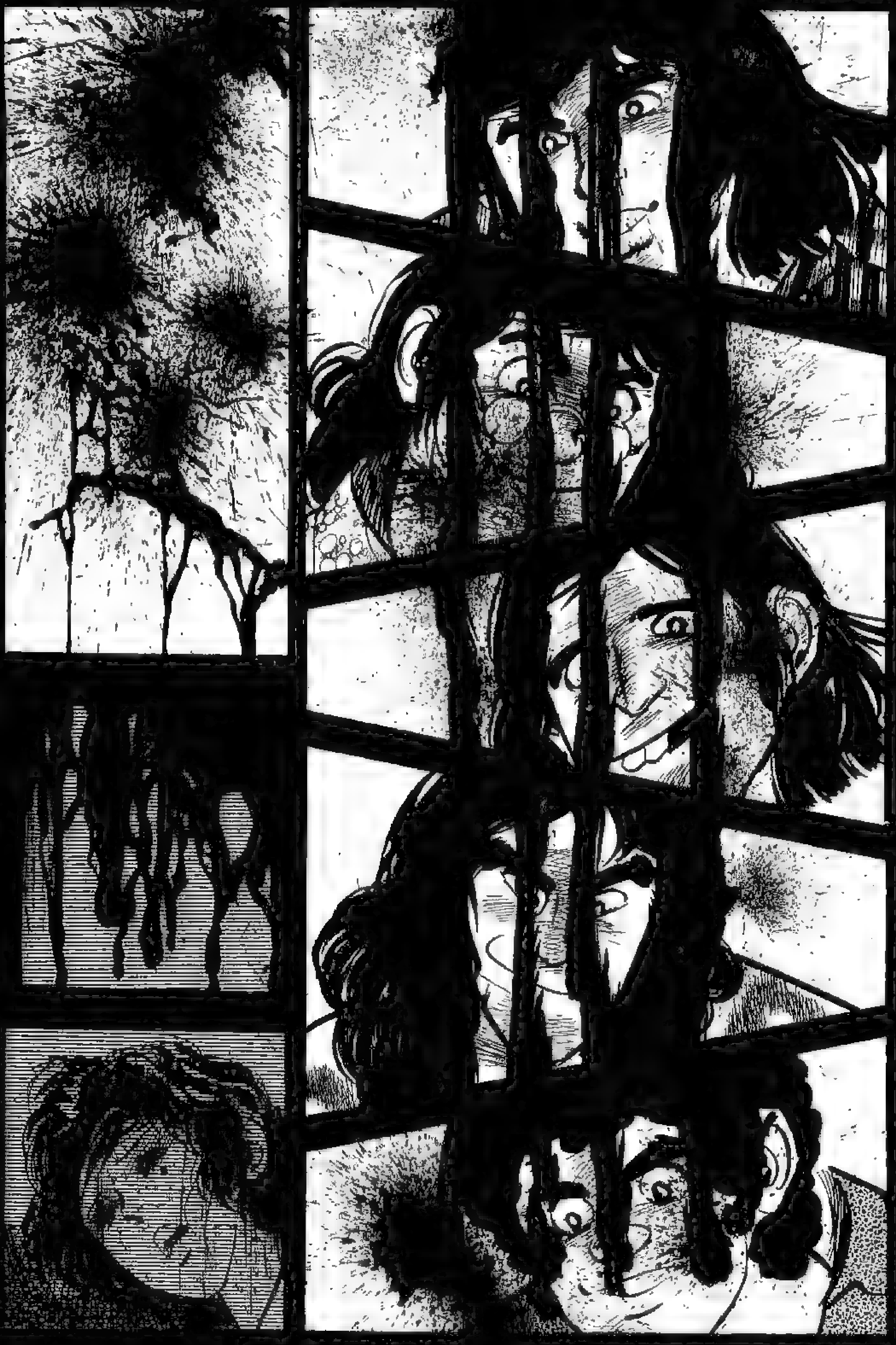
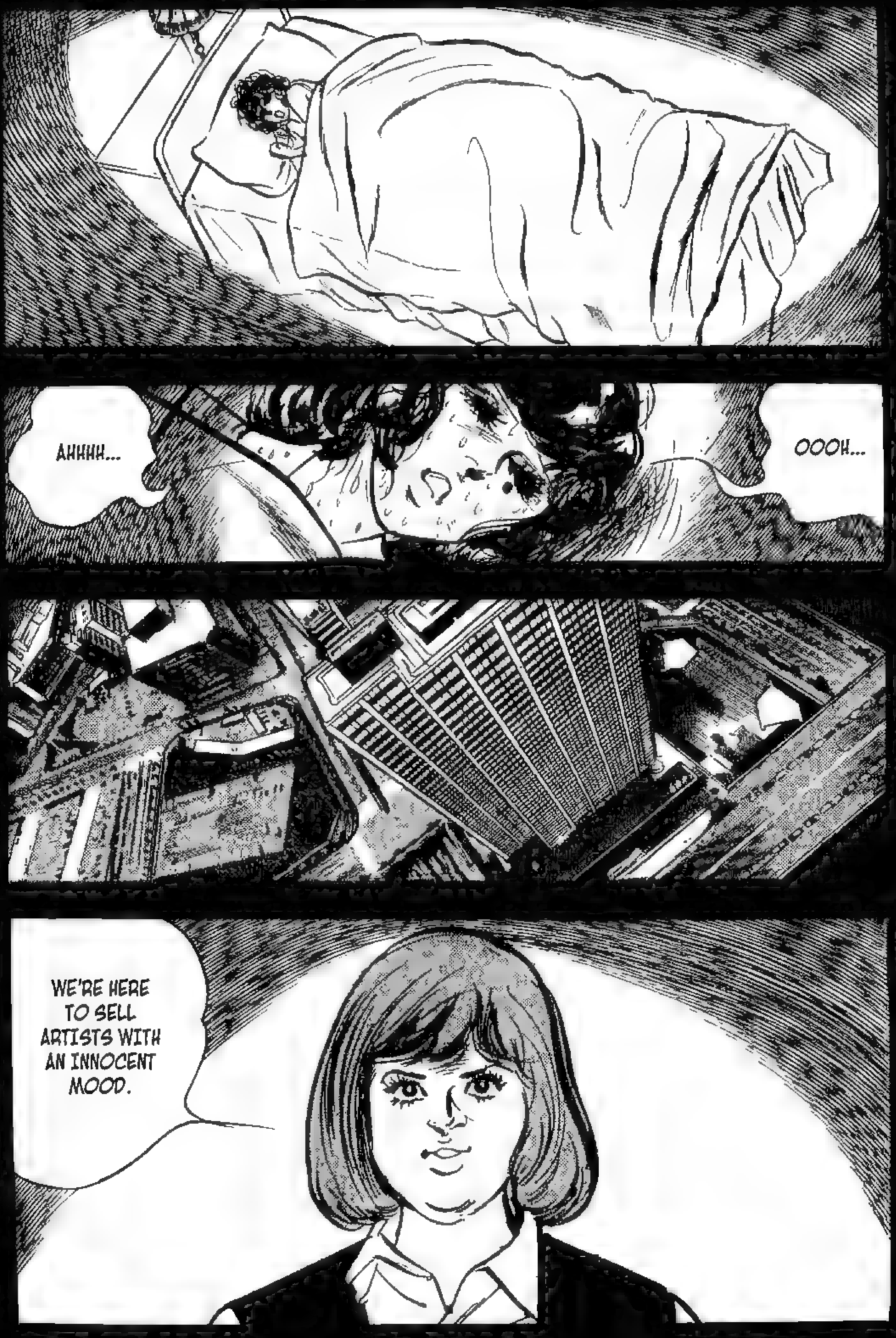
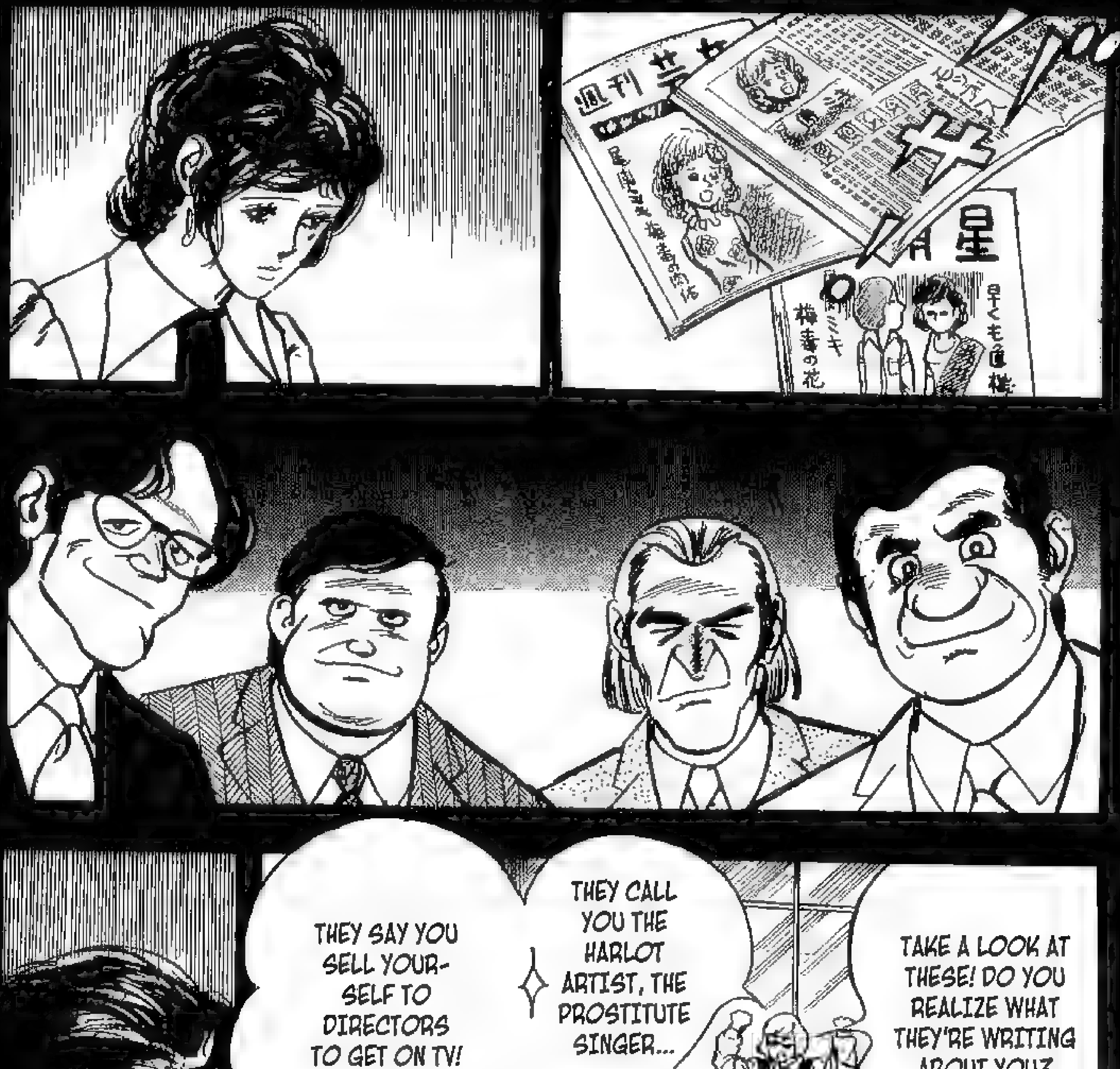
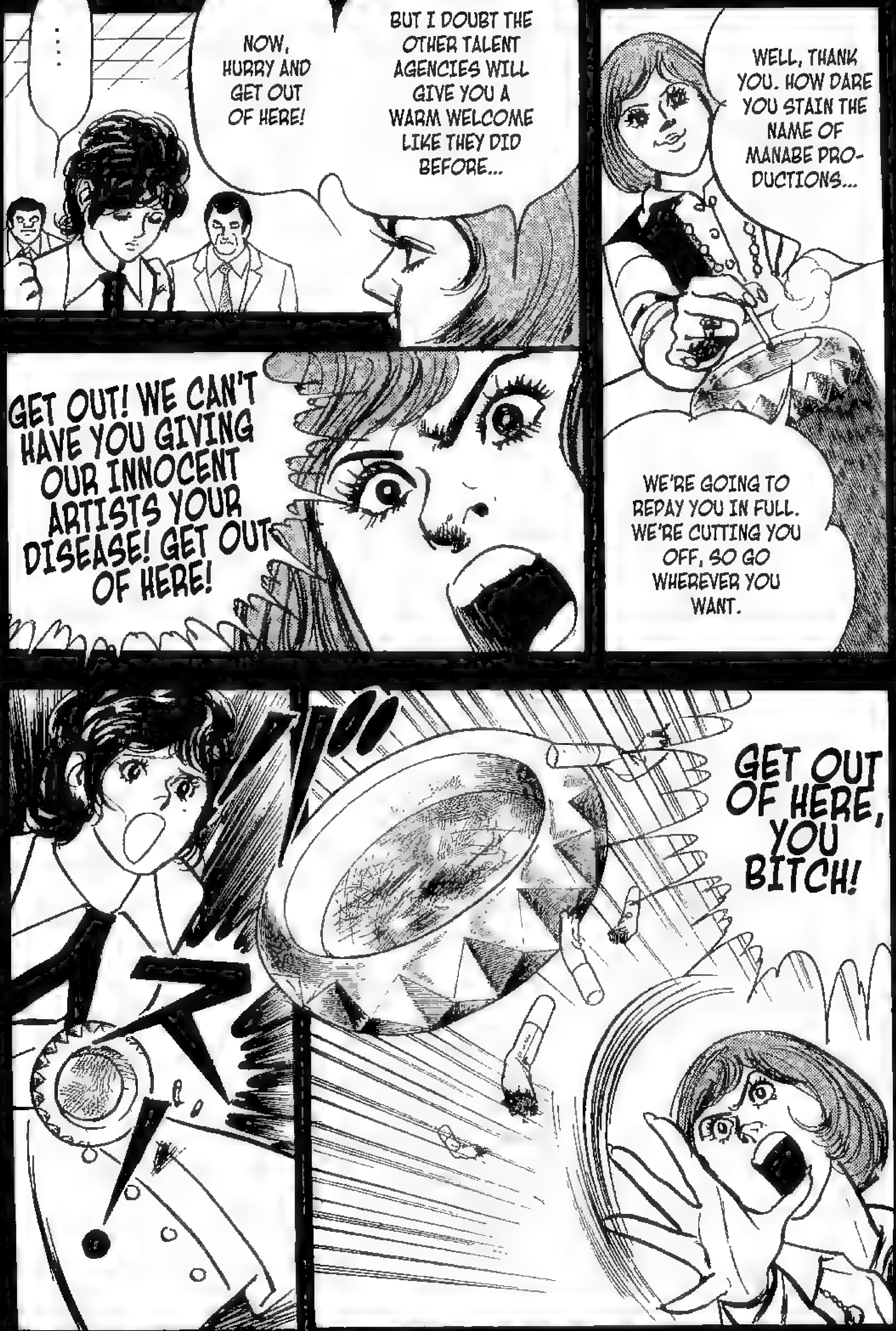

HEHEHE...
AHAHAHAHA...
HEHE...


HEHEHEHE...

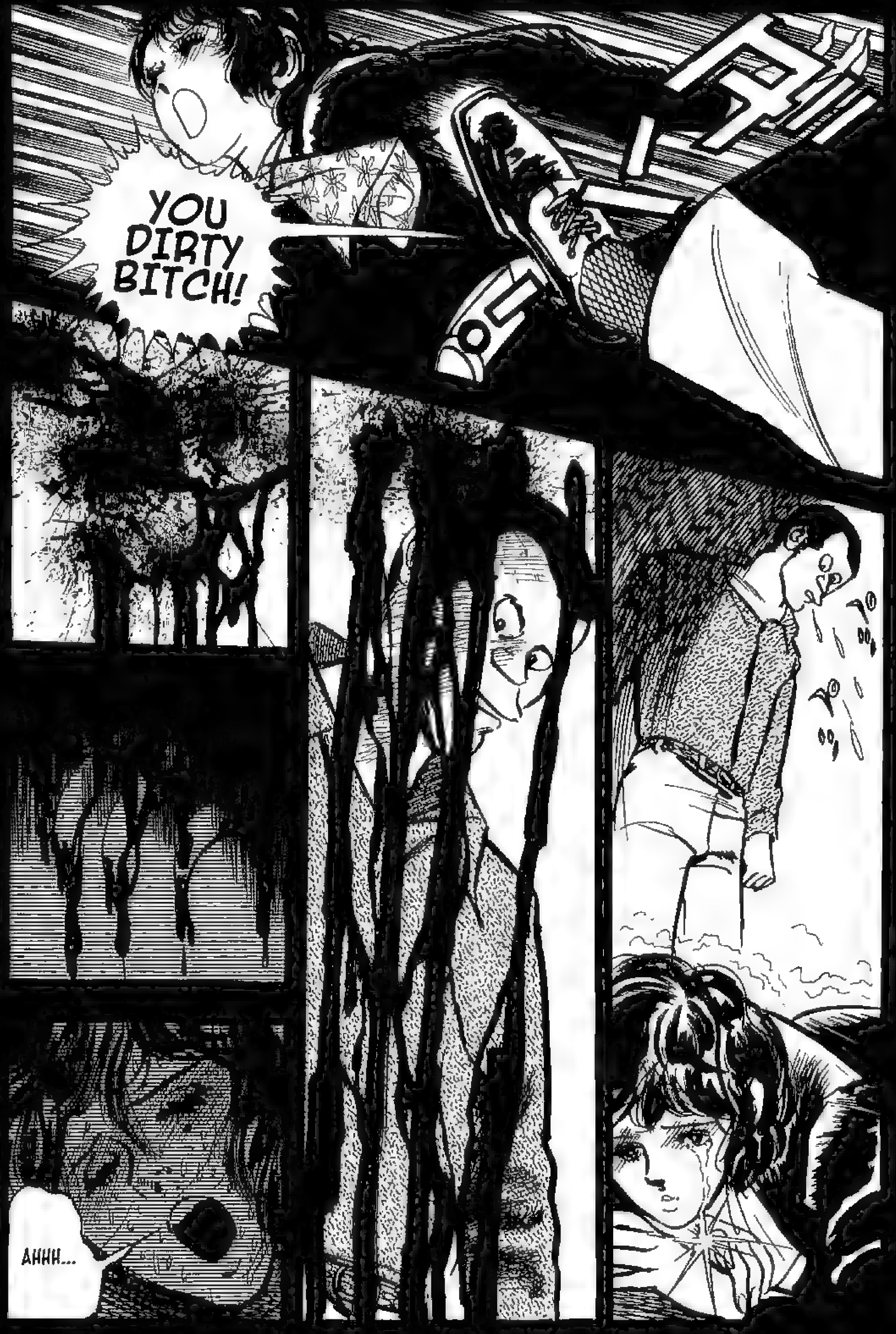


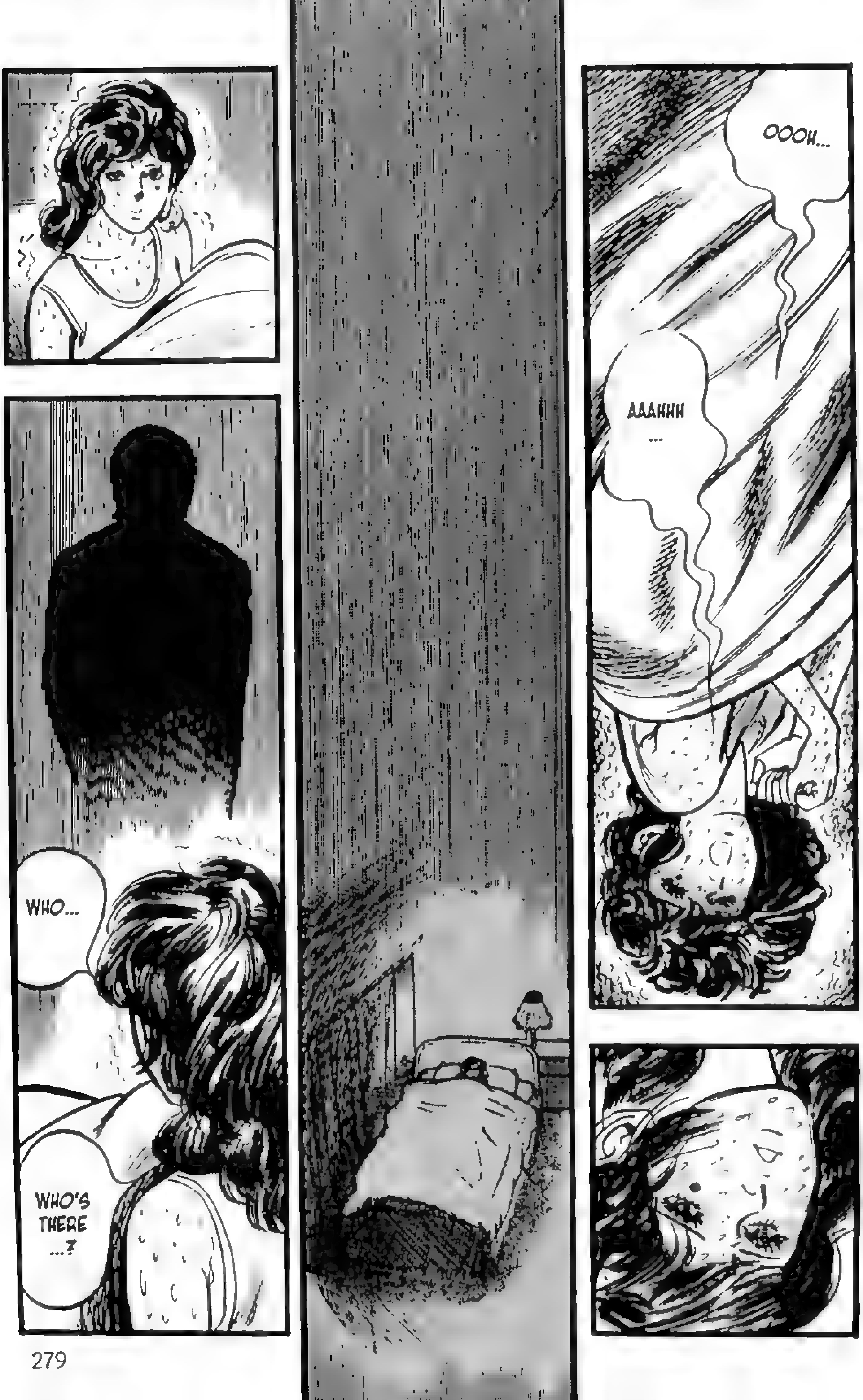

OOOH...
AHHHH...
WE'RE HERE TO SELL ARTISTS WITH AN INNOCENT MOOD.

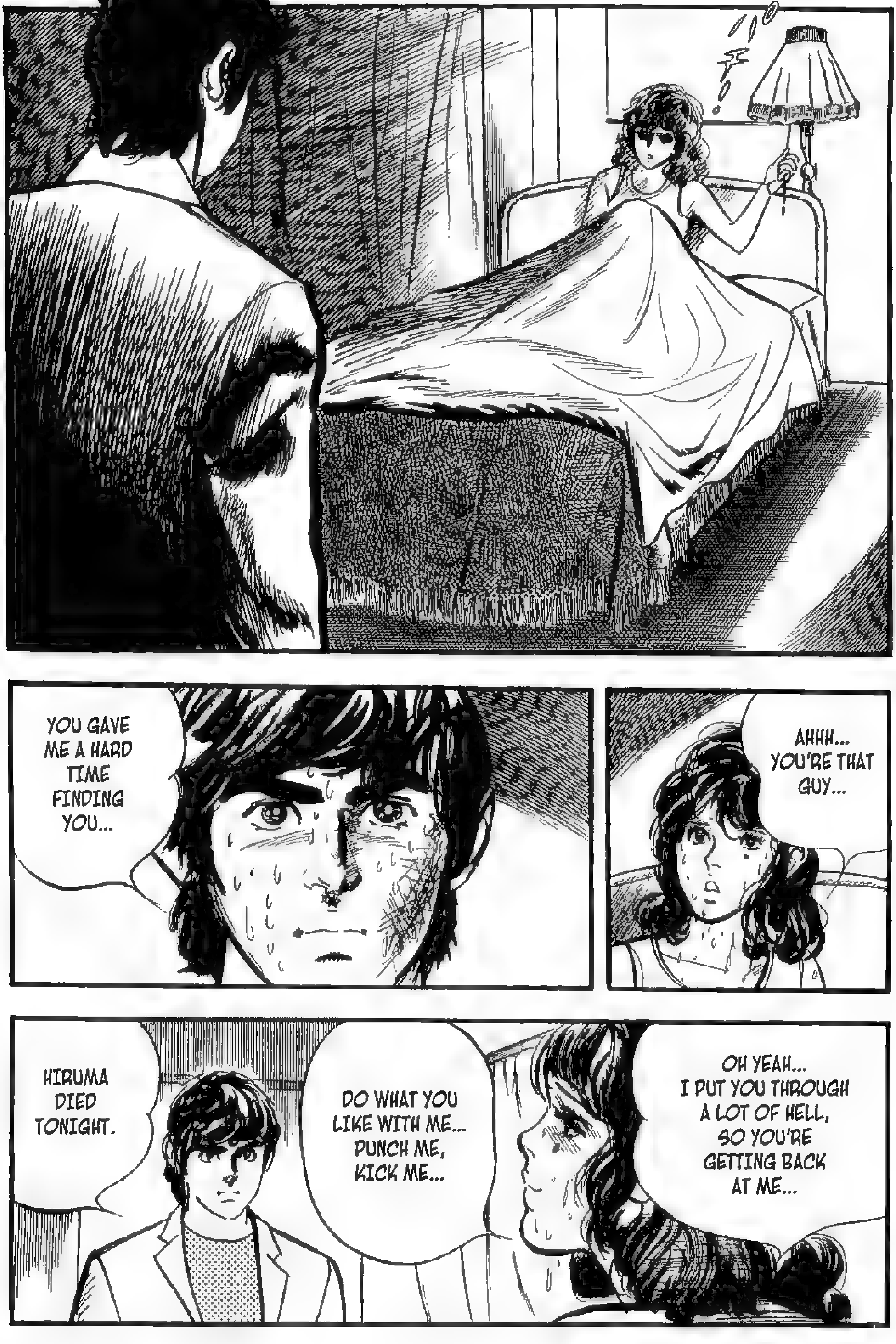

TAKE A LOOK AT THESE! DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THEY'RE WRITING ABOUT YOU?
THEY CALL YOU THE HARLOT ARTIST, THE PROSTITUTE SINGER...
THEY SAY YOU SELL YOURSELF TO DIRECTORS TO GET ON TV!
AND YOU'VE BEEN SPREADING A HORRIBLE DISEASE!

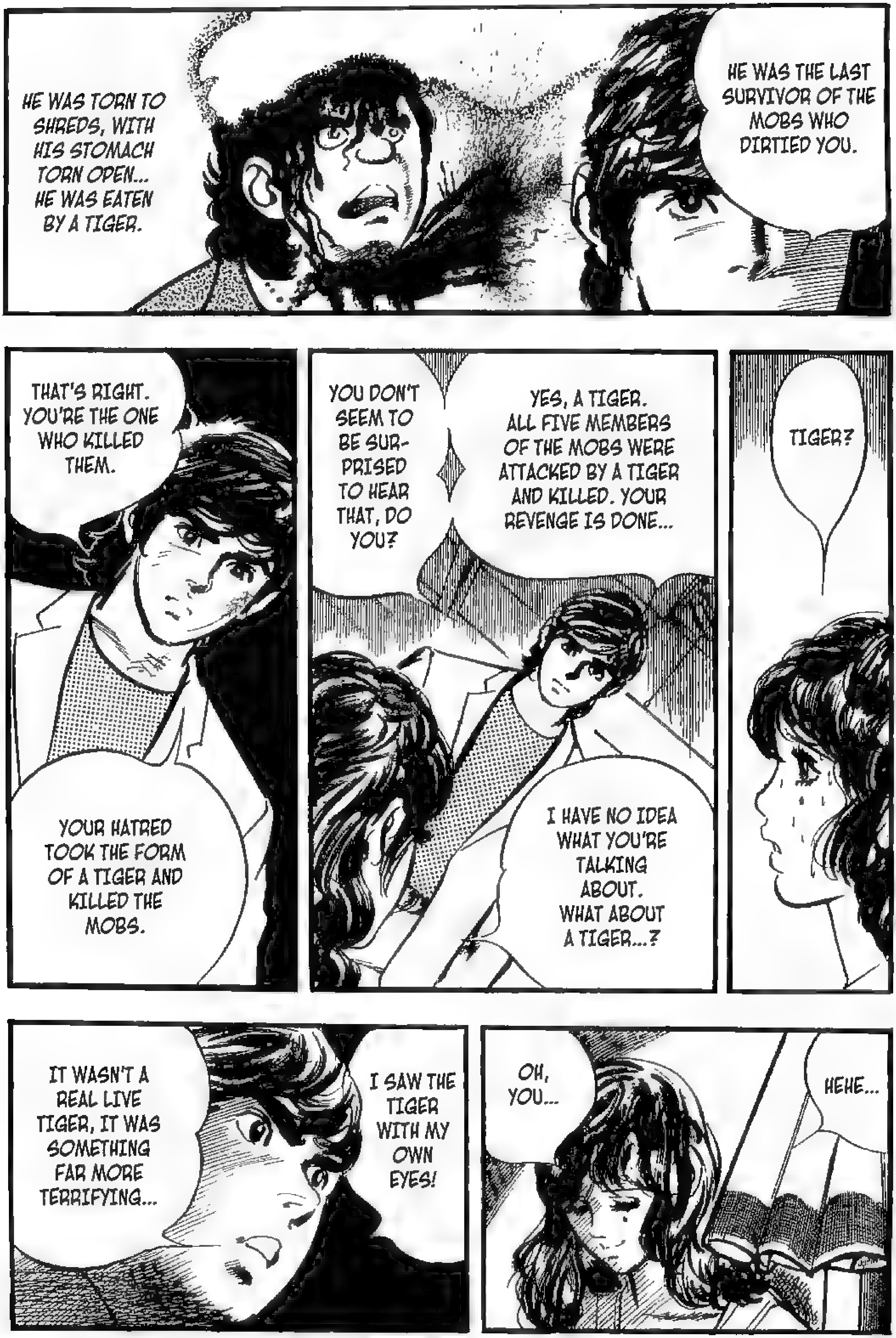

WELL, THANK YOU. HOW DARE YOU STAIN THE NAME OF MANABE PRODUCTIONS...
WE'RE GOING TO REPAY YOU IN FULL. WE'RE CUTTING YOU OFF, SO GO WHEREVER YOU WANT.
BUT I DOUBT THE OTHER TALENT AGENCIES WILL GIVE YOU A WARM WELCOME LIKE THEY DID BEFORE...
NOW, HURRY AND GET OUT OF HERE!
......
GET OUT! WE CAN'T HAVE YOU GIVING OUR INNOCENT ARTISTS YOUR DISEASE! GET OUT OF HERE!
GET OUT OF HERE, YOU BITCH!

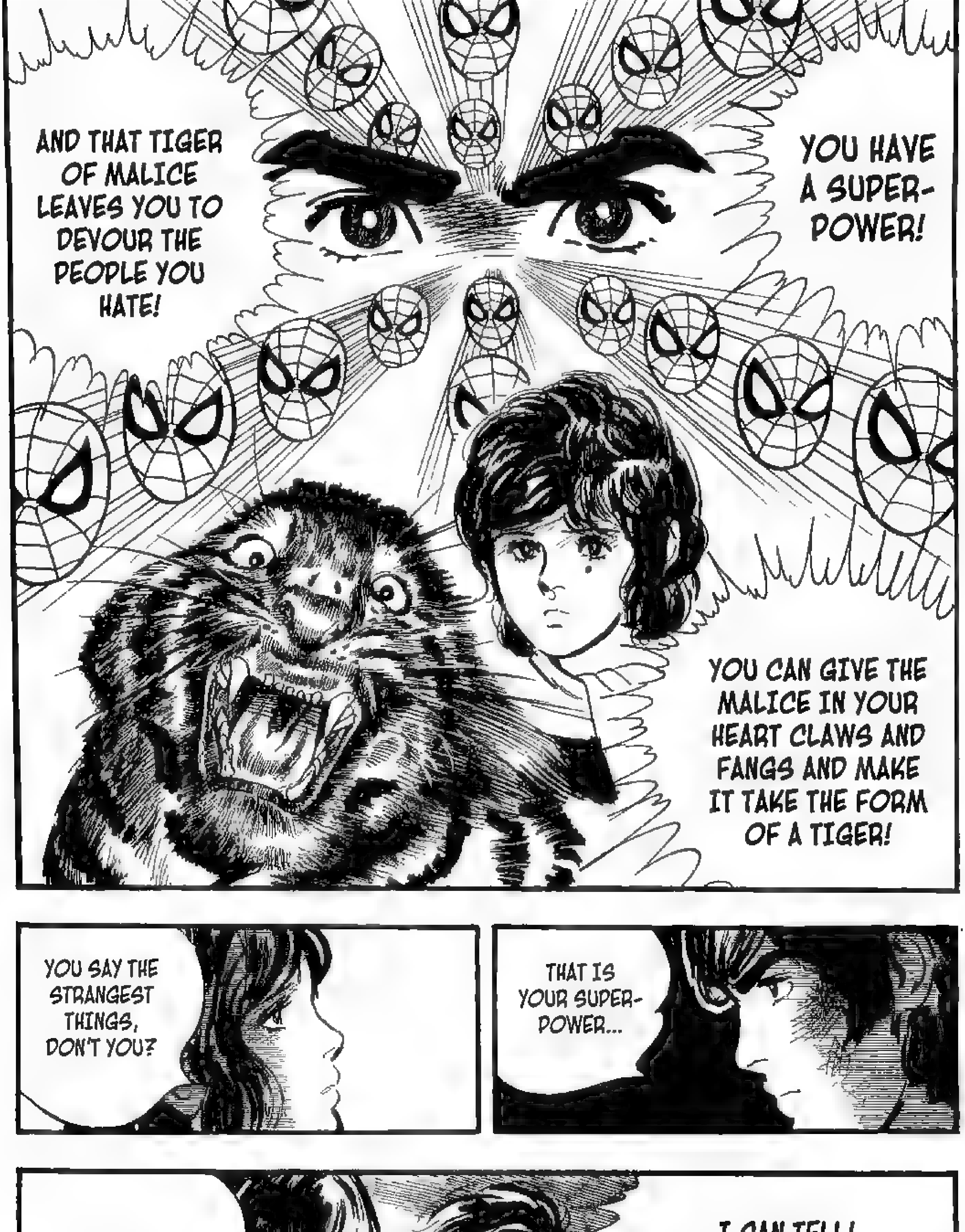
TAKE THIS DIRTY BITCH OUT OF HERE!
つほほほ
おおおお
YOU SHOULD JUST STAND ON THE STREETS AT NIGHT AND ATTRACT CUSTOMERS!
HOW DARE A MERE PUNK ARTIST LIKE YOU GET SO CONCEITED, YOU UNGRATEFUL BITCH!
IF YOU THINK YOU CAN STILL SURVIVE OFF SHOW BUSINESS, YOU'RE DEAD WRONG!
WE'LL SHOW YOU WHAT HAPPENS TO ARTISTS WHO DARE DEFY MANABE PRODUCTIONS!
WE NEED TO GO BUY MASKS! WE DON'T WANT TO CATCH IT!
HEY, WE SHOULD DISINFECT THE ROOM! THIS IS JUST TOO GROSS!

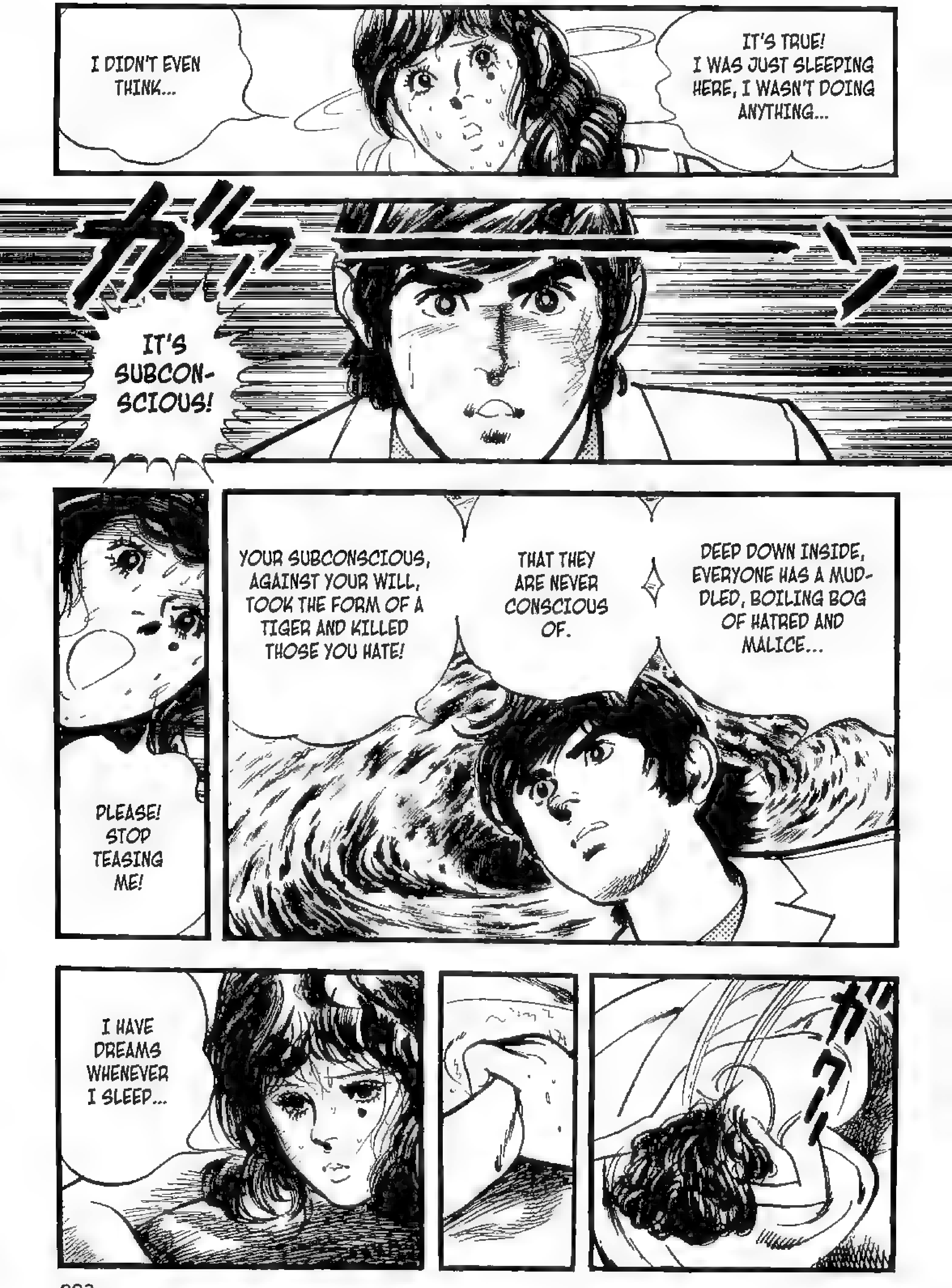

YOU DIRTY BITCH!
AHHH...

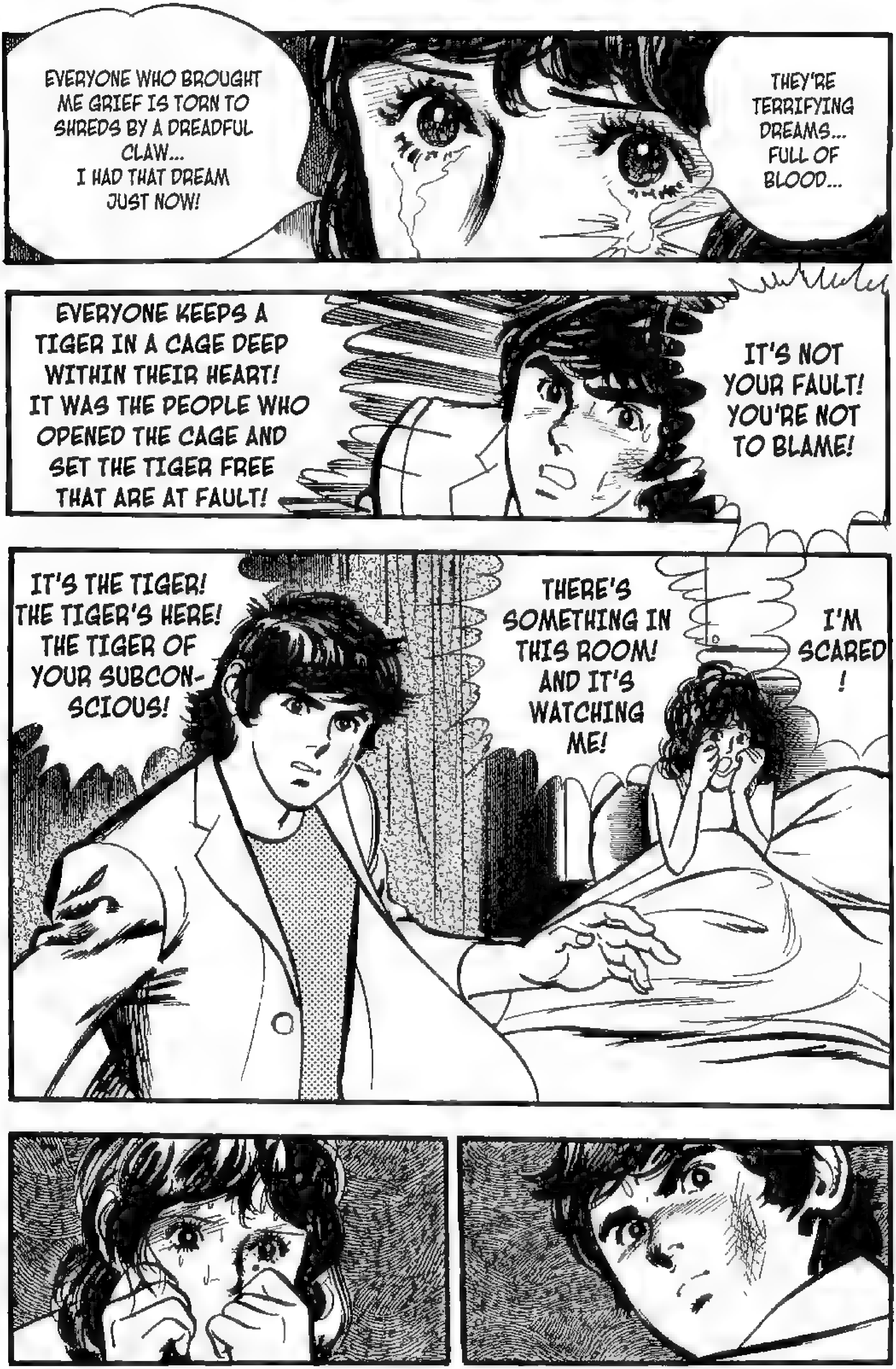

OOOH...
AAAHH ...
WHO...
WHO'S THERE ...?

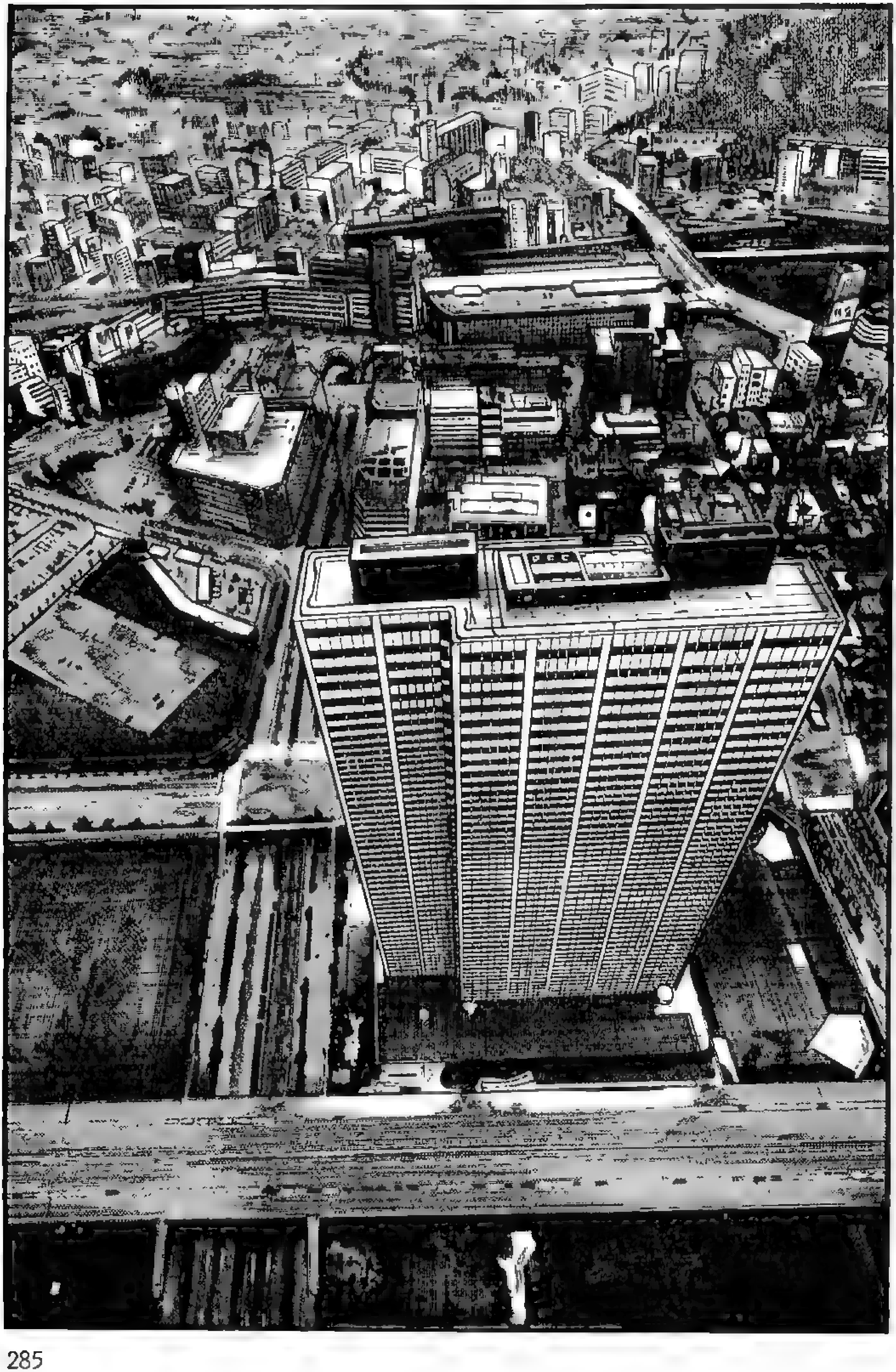

AHHH... YOU'RE THAT GUY...
YOU GAVE ME A HARD TIME FINDING YOU...
OH YEAH... I PUT YOU THROUGH A LOT OF HELL, SO YOU'RE GETTING BACK AT ME...
DO WHAT YOU LIKE WITH ME... PUNCH ME, KICK ME...
HIRUMA DIED TONIGHT.

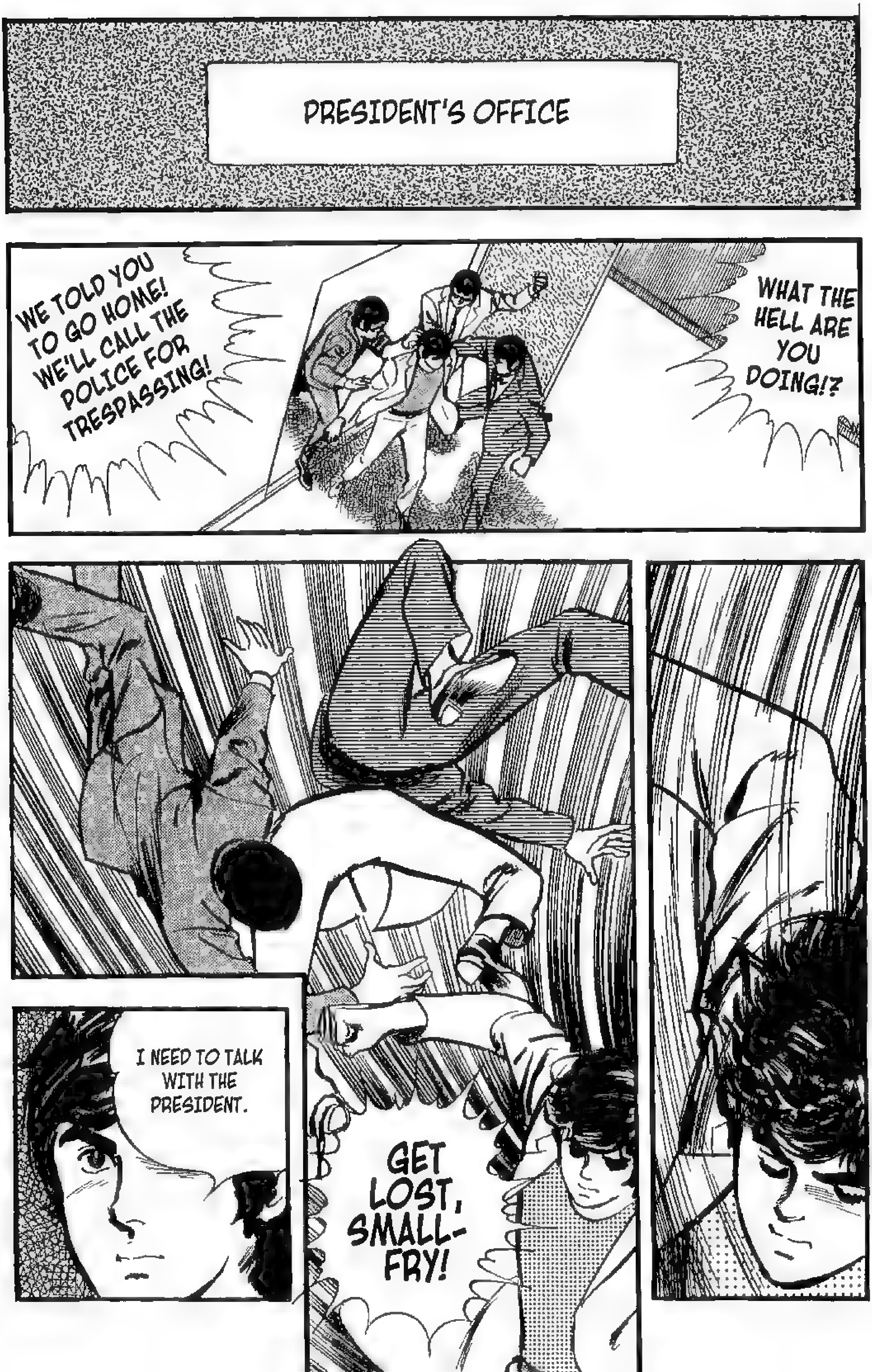

HE WAS THE LAST SURVIVOR OF THE MOBS WHO DIRTIED YOU.
HE WAS TORN TO SHREDS, WITH HIS STOMACH TORN OPEN... HE WAS EATEN BY A TIGER.
TIGER?
YES, A TIGER. ALL FIVE MEMBERS OF THE MOBS WERE ATTACKED BY A TIGER AND KILLED. YOUR REVENGE IS DONE...
YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE SURPRISED TO HEAR THAT, DO YOU?
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. WHAT ABOUT A TIGER...?
THAT'S RIGHT. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO KILLED THEM.
YOUR HATRED TOOK THE FORM OF A TIGER AND KILLED THE MOBS.
HEHE...
OH, YOU...
I SAW THE TIGER WITH MY OWN EYES!
IT WASN'T A REAL LIVE TIGER, IT WAS SOMETHING FAR MORE TERRIFYING...

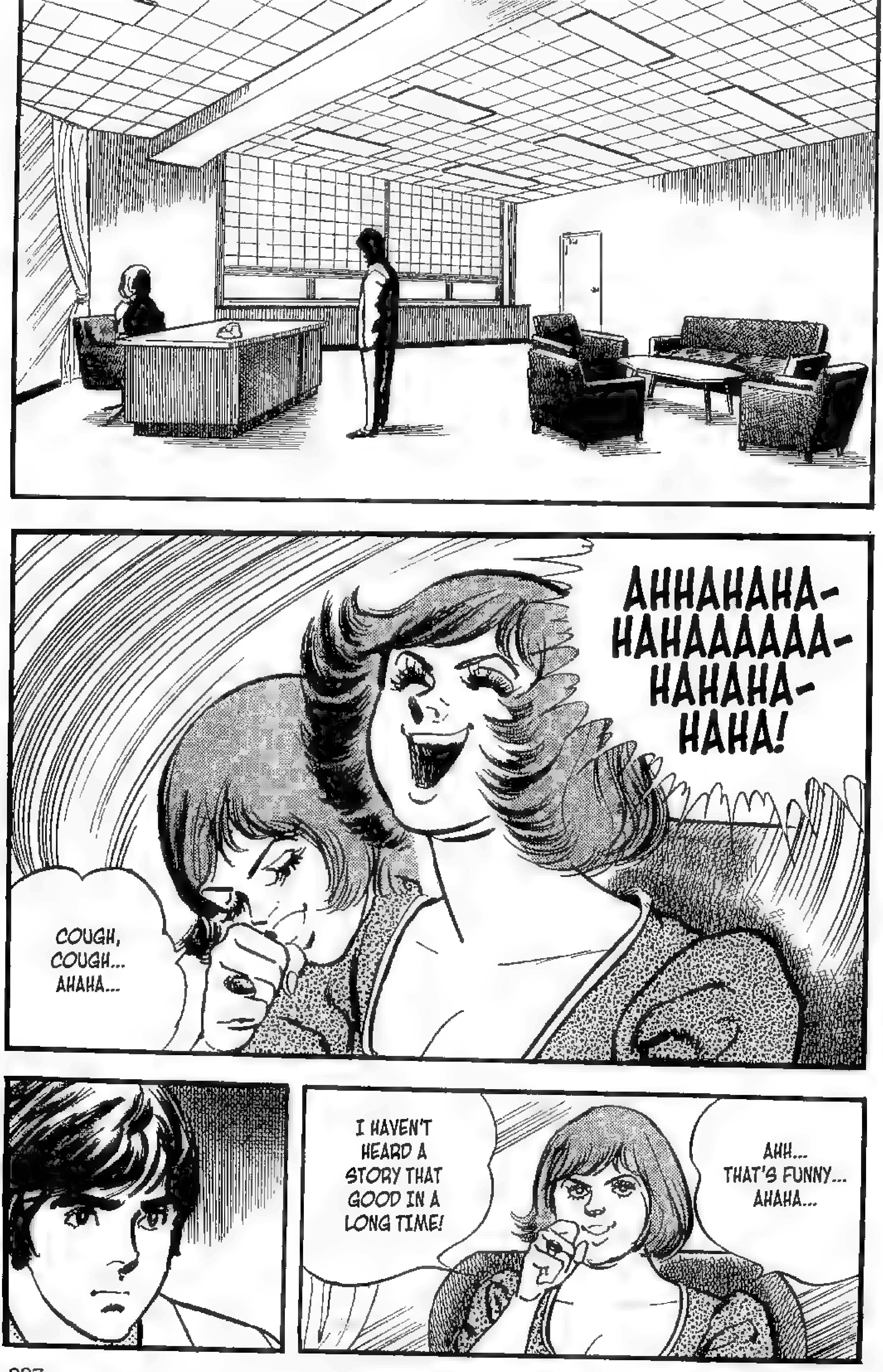

YOU HAVE A SUPER-POWER!
YOU CAN GIVE THE MALICE IN YOUR HEART CLAWS AND FANGS AND MAKE IT TAKE THE FORM OF A TIGER!
AND THAT TIGER OF MALICE LEAVES YOU TO DEVOUR THE PEOPLE YOU HATE!
THAT IS YOUR SUPER-POWER...
YOU SAY THE STRANGEST THINGS, DON'T YOU?
I CAN TELL! THAT TIGER IS BACK, LICKING HIRUMA'S BLOOD OFF ITS CLAWS!
STOP IT! I DON'T HATE ANYONE ANYMORE...

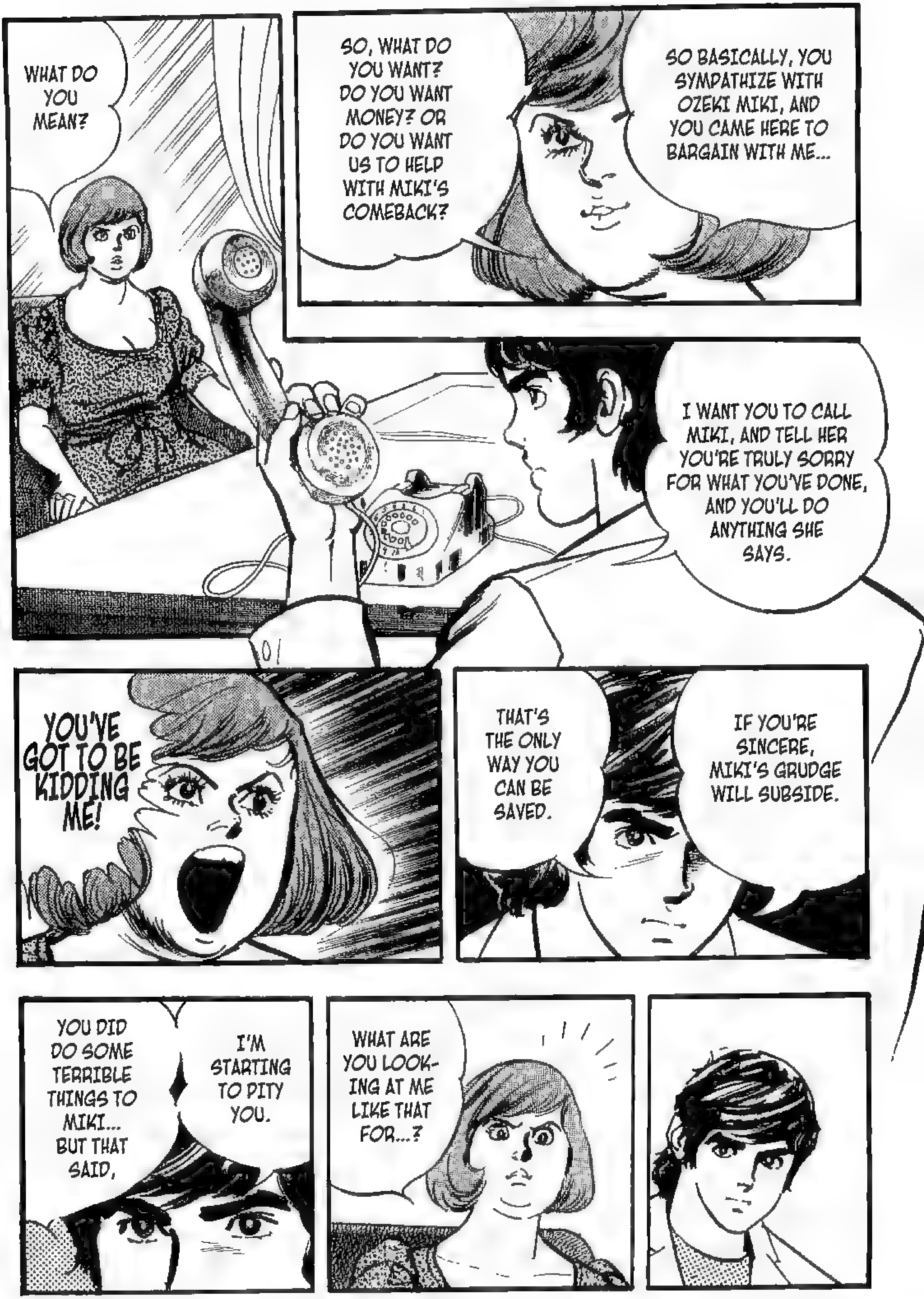

IT'S TRUE! I WAS JUST SLEEPING HERE, I WASN'T DOING ANYTHING...
I DIDN'T EVEN THINK...
ガッーン
IT'S SUBCONSCIOUS!
DEEP DOWN INSIDE, EVERYONE HAS A MUDDLED, BOILING BOG OF HATRED AND MALICE...
THAT THEY ARE NEVER CONSCIOUS OF.
YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS, AGAINST YOUR WILL, TOOK THE FORM OF A TIGER AND KILLED THOSE YOU HATE!
PLEASE! STOP TEASING ME!
ガクー
I HAVE DREAMS WHENEVER I SLEEP...

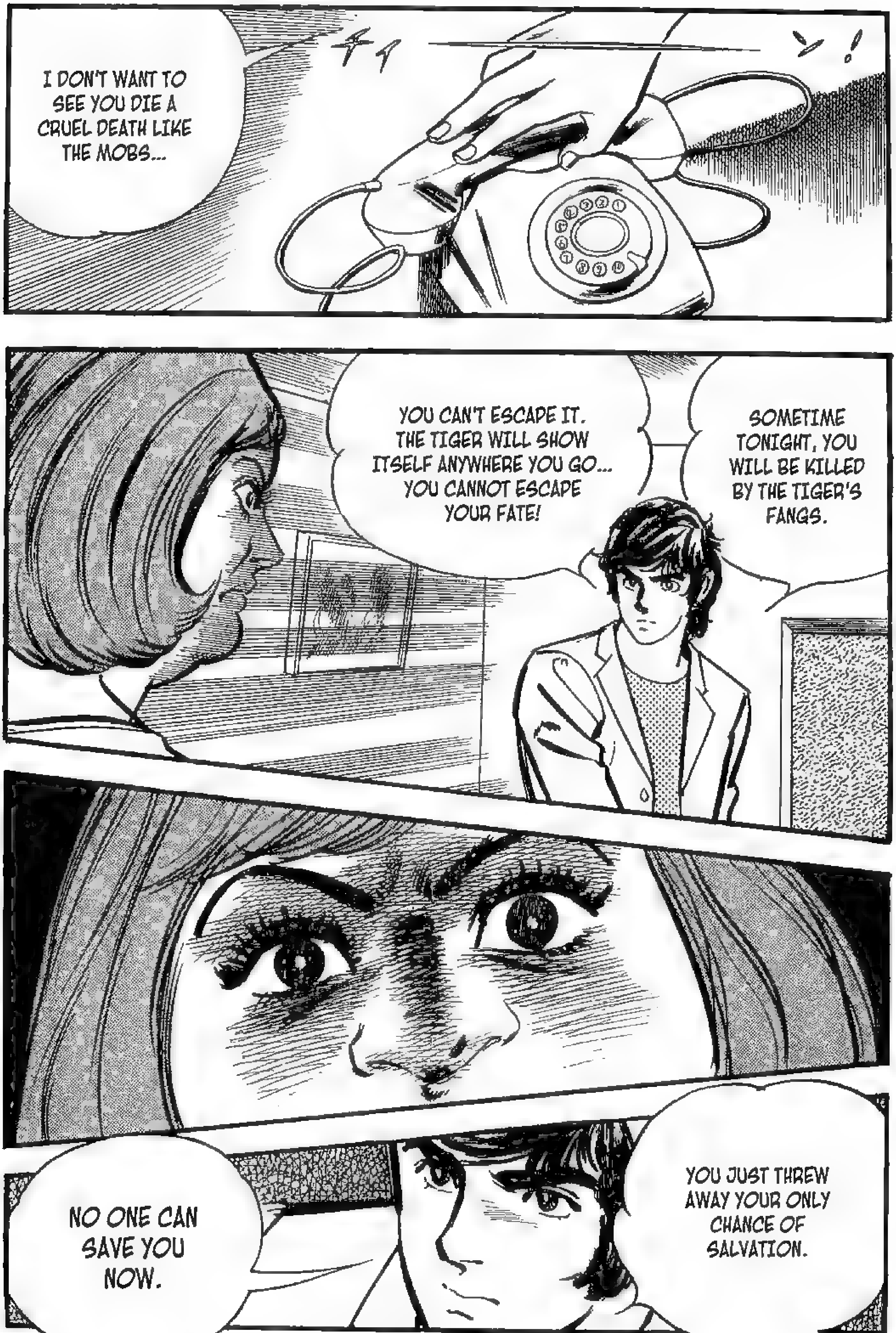

THEY'RE TERRIFYING DREAMS... FULL OF BLOOD...
EVERYONE WHO BROUGHT ME GRIEF IS TORN TO SHREDS BY A DREADFUL CLAW... I HAD THAT DREAM JUST NOW!
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT! YOU'RE NOT TO BLAME!
EVERYONE KEEPS A TIGER IN A CAGE DEEP WITHIN THEIR HEART! IT WAS THE PEOPLE WHO OPENED THE CAGE AND SET THE TIGER FREE THAT ARE AT FAULT!
I'M SCARED!
THERE'S SOMETHING IN THIS ROOM! AND IT'S WATCHING ME!
IT'S THE TIGER! THE TIGER'S HERE! THE TIGER OF YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS!




PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING!?
WE TOLD YOU TO GO HOME! WE'LL CALL THE POLICE FOR TRESPASSING!
GET LOST, SMALL-FRY!
I NEED TO TALK WITH THE PRESIDENT.


AHHAHAHA-HAHAAAAAA-HAHAHA-HAHA!
COUGH, COUGH... AHAHA...
AHH... THAT'S FUNNY... AHAHA...
I HAVEN'T HEARD A STORY THAT GOOD IN A LONG TIME!


SO BASICALLY, YOU SYMPATHIZE WITH OZEKI MIKI, AND YOU CAME HERE TO BARGAIN WITH ME...
SO, WHAT DO YOU WANT? DO YOU WANT MONEY? OR DO YOU WANT US TO HELP WITH MIKI'S COMEBACK?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I WANT YOU TO CALL MIKI, AND TELL HER YOU'RE TRULY SORRY FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE, AND YOU'LL DO ANYTHING SHE SAYS.
IF YOU'RE SINCERE, MIKI'S GRUDGE WILL SUBSIDE.
THAT'S THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN BE SAVED.
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT FOR...?
YOU DID DO SOME TERRIBLE THINGS TO MIKI... BUT THAT SAID,
I'M STARTING TO PITY YOU.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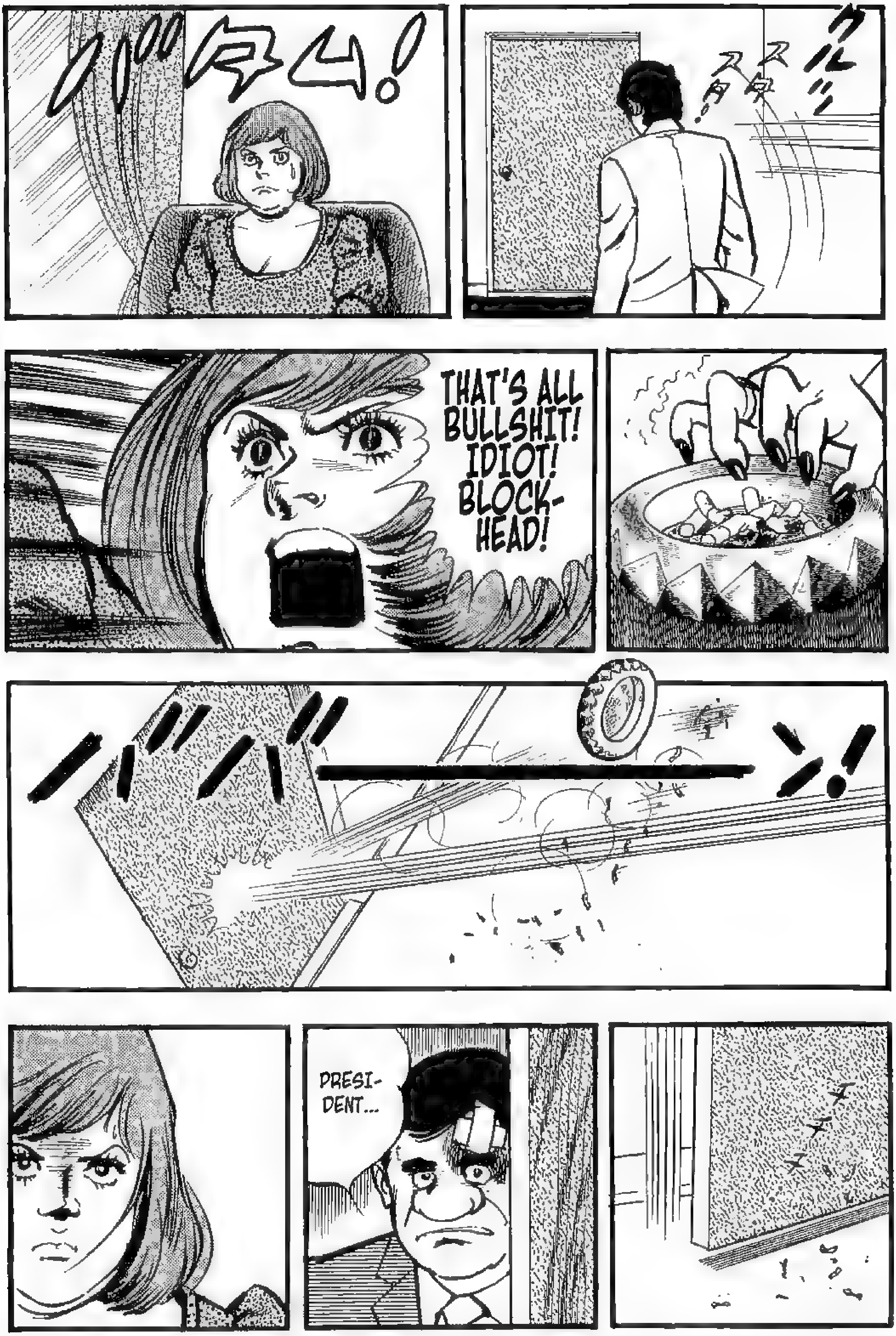
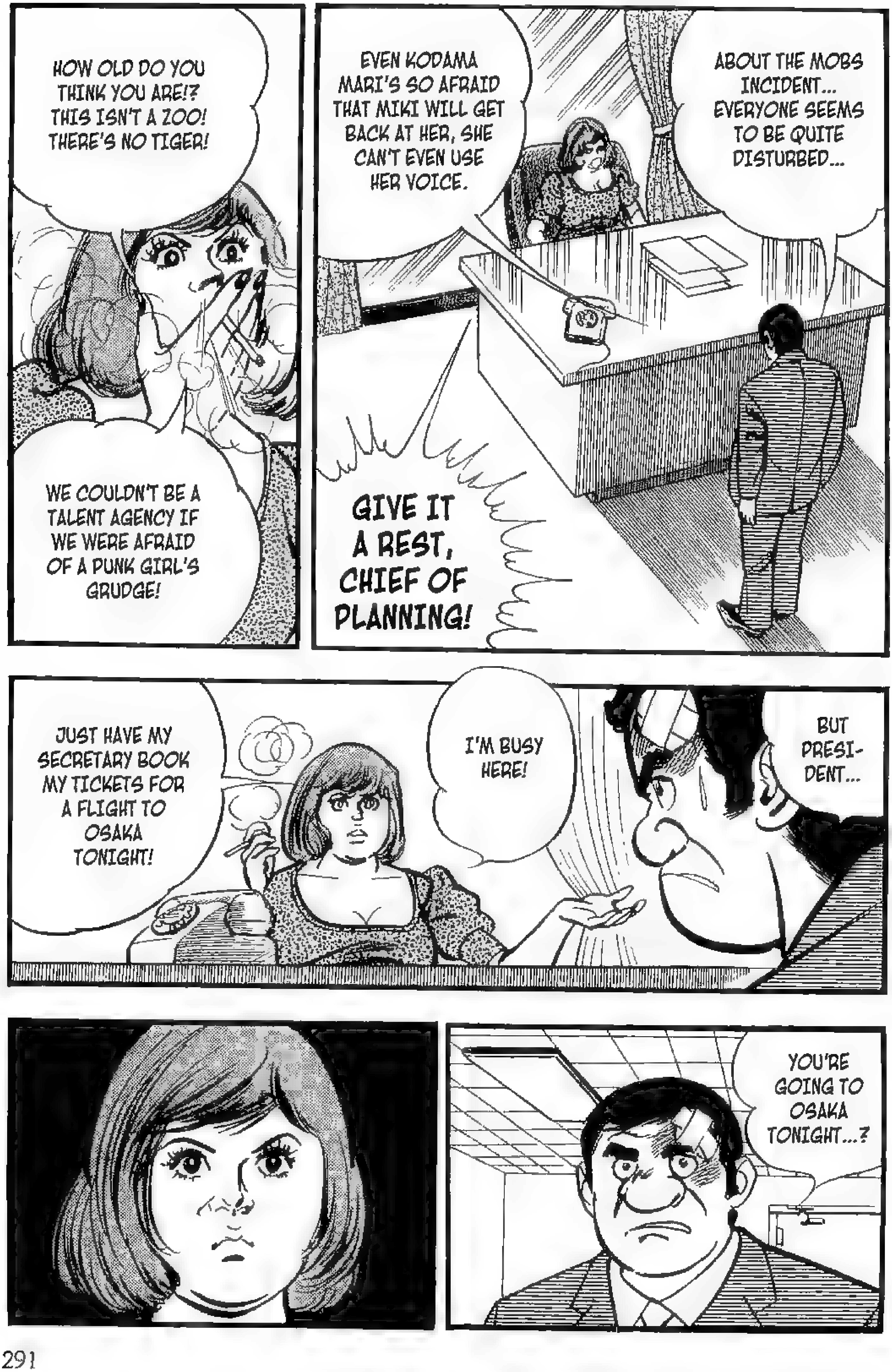
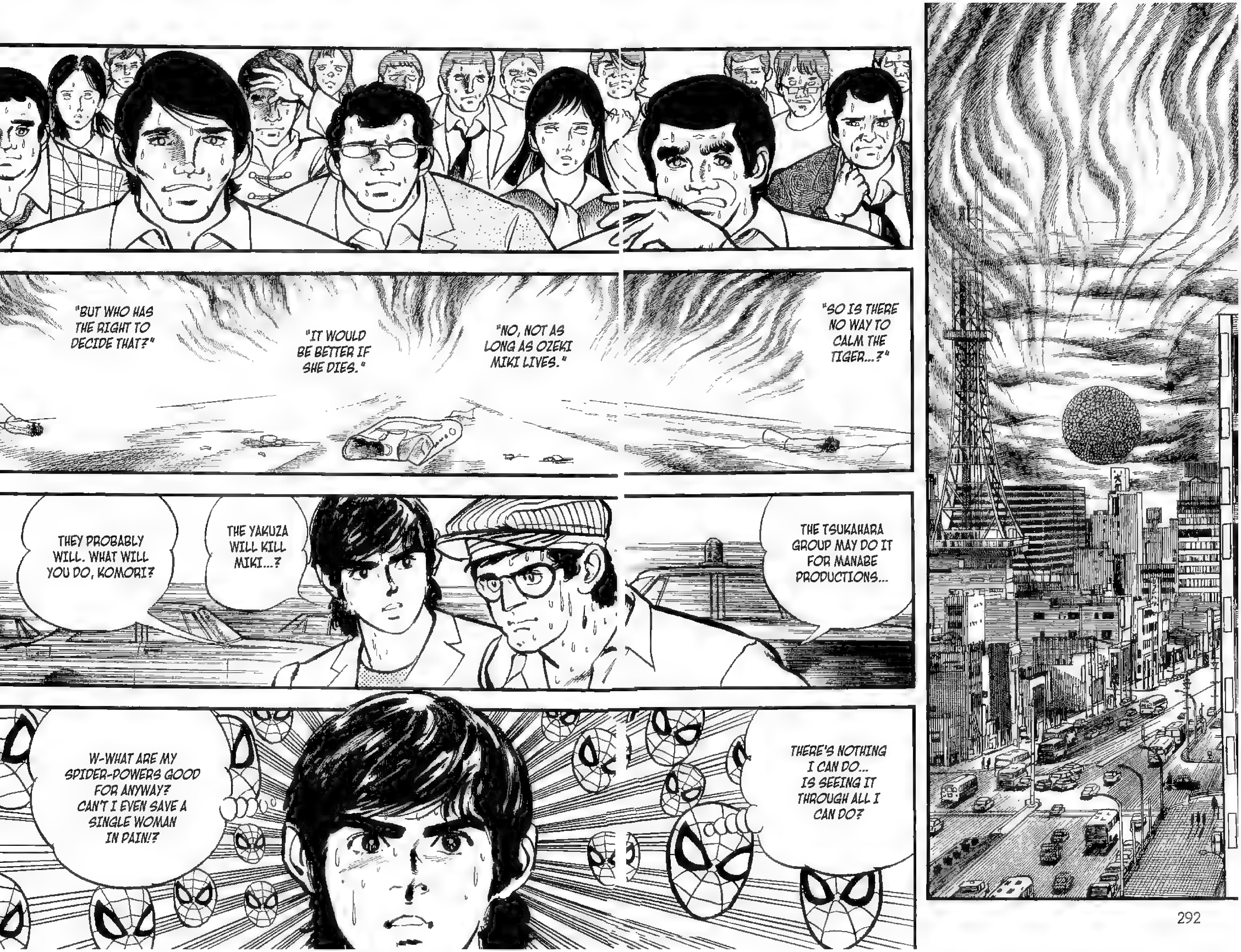
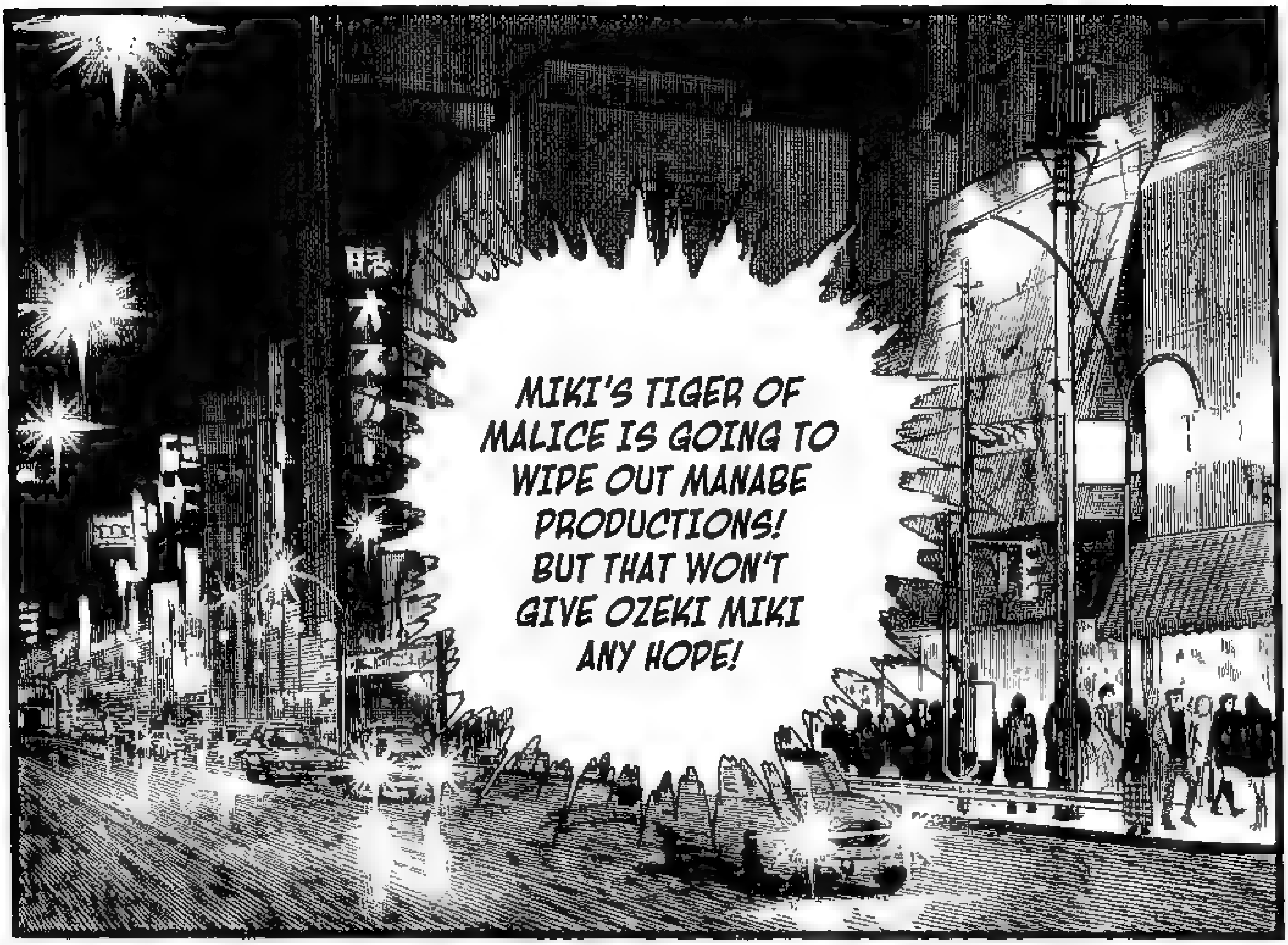
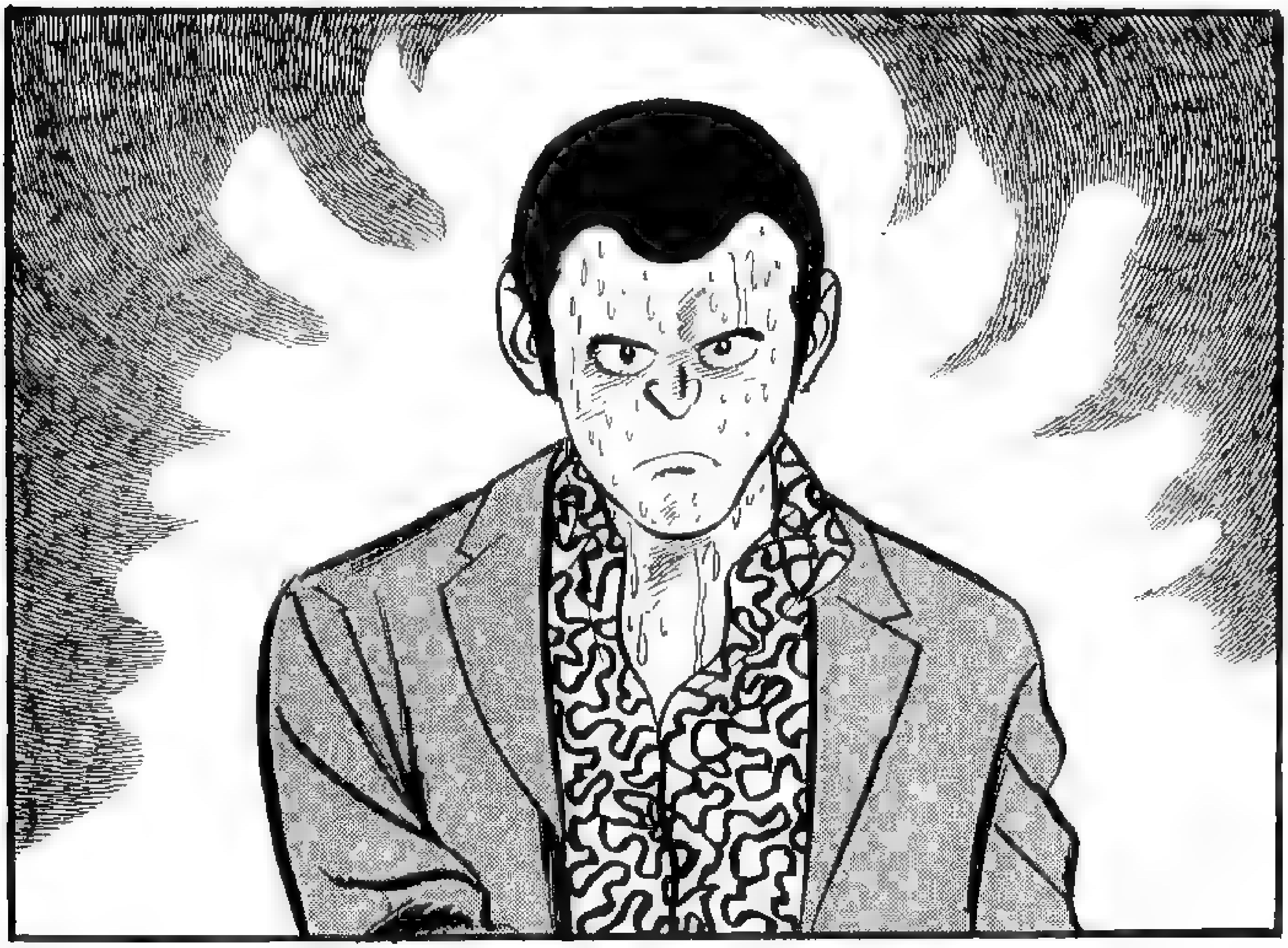
I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU DIE A CRUEL DEATH LIKE THE MOBS...
SOMETIME TONIGHT, YOU WILL BE KILLED BY THE TIGER'S FANGS.
YOU CAN'T ESCAPE IT. THE TIGER WILL SHOW ITSELF ANYWHERE YOU GO... YOU CANNOT ESCAPE YOUR FATE!
YOU JUST THREW AWAY YOUR ONLY CHANCE OF SALVATION.
NO ONE CAN SAVE YOU NOW.

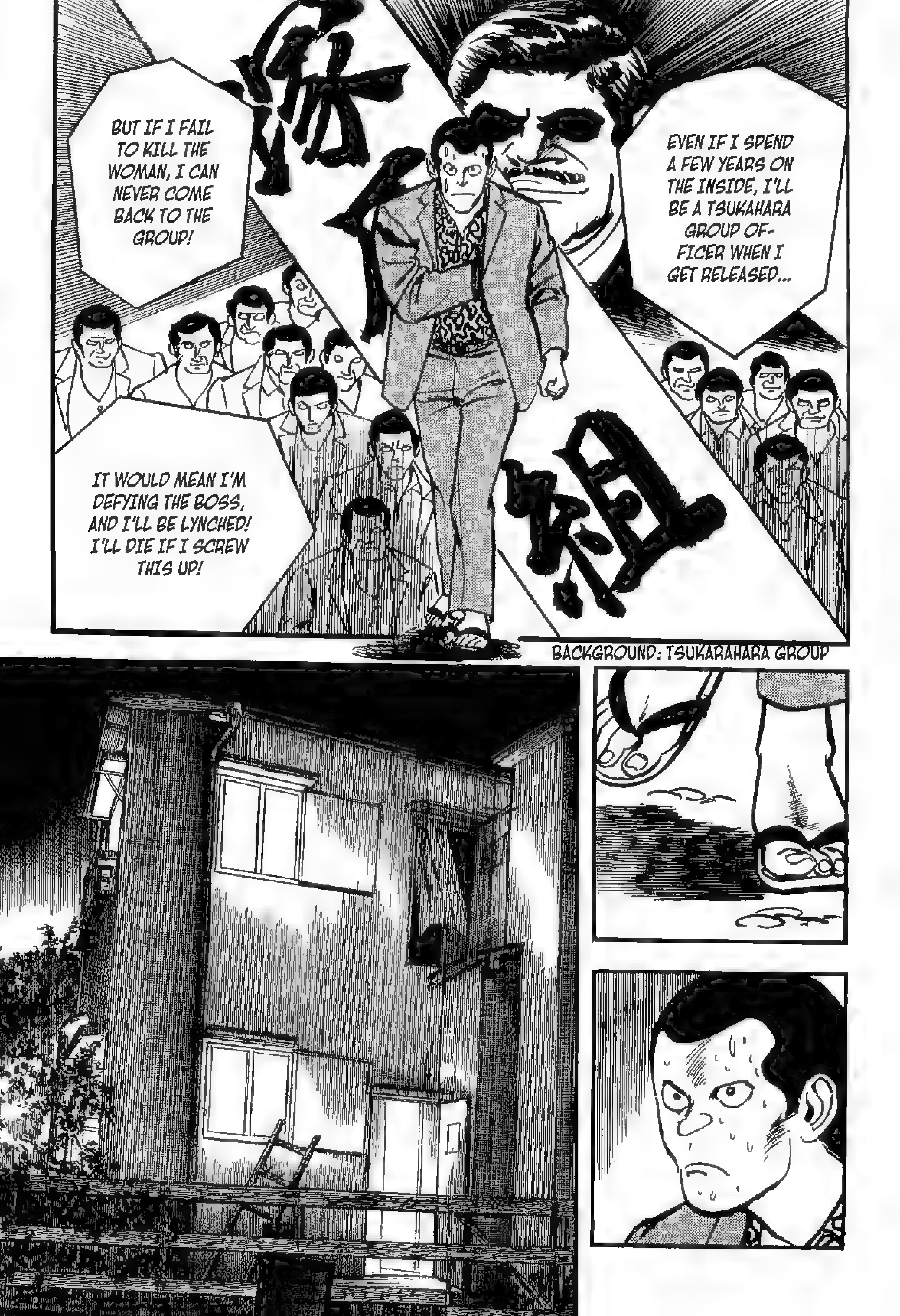

クルッ
スタスタ
バタム!
THAT'S ALL BULLSHIT! IDIOT! BLOCKHEAD!
ババーン!
PRESIDENT...


ABOUT THE MOBS INCIDENT... EVERYONE SEEMS TO BE QUITE DISTURBED...
EVEN KODAMA MARI'S SO AFRAID THAT MIKI WILL GET BACK AT HER, SHE CAN'T EVEN USE HER VOICE.
GIVE IT A REST, CHIEF OF PLANNING!
HOW OLD DO YOU THINK YOU ARE!? THIS ISN'T A ZOO! THERE'S NO TIGER!
WE COULDN'T BE A TALENT AGENCY IF WE WERE AFRAID OF A PUNK GIRL'S GRUDGE!
BUT PRESI- DENT...
I'M BUSY HERE!
JUST HAVE MY SECRETARY BOOK MY TICKETS FOR A FLIGHT TO OSAKA TONIGHT!
YOU'RE GOING TO OSAKA TONIGHT...?

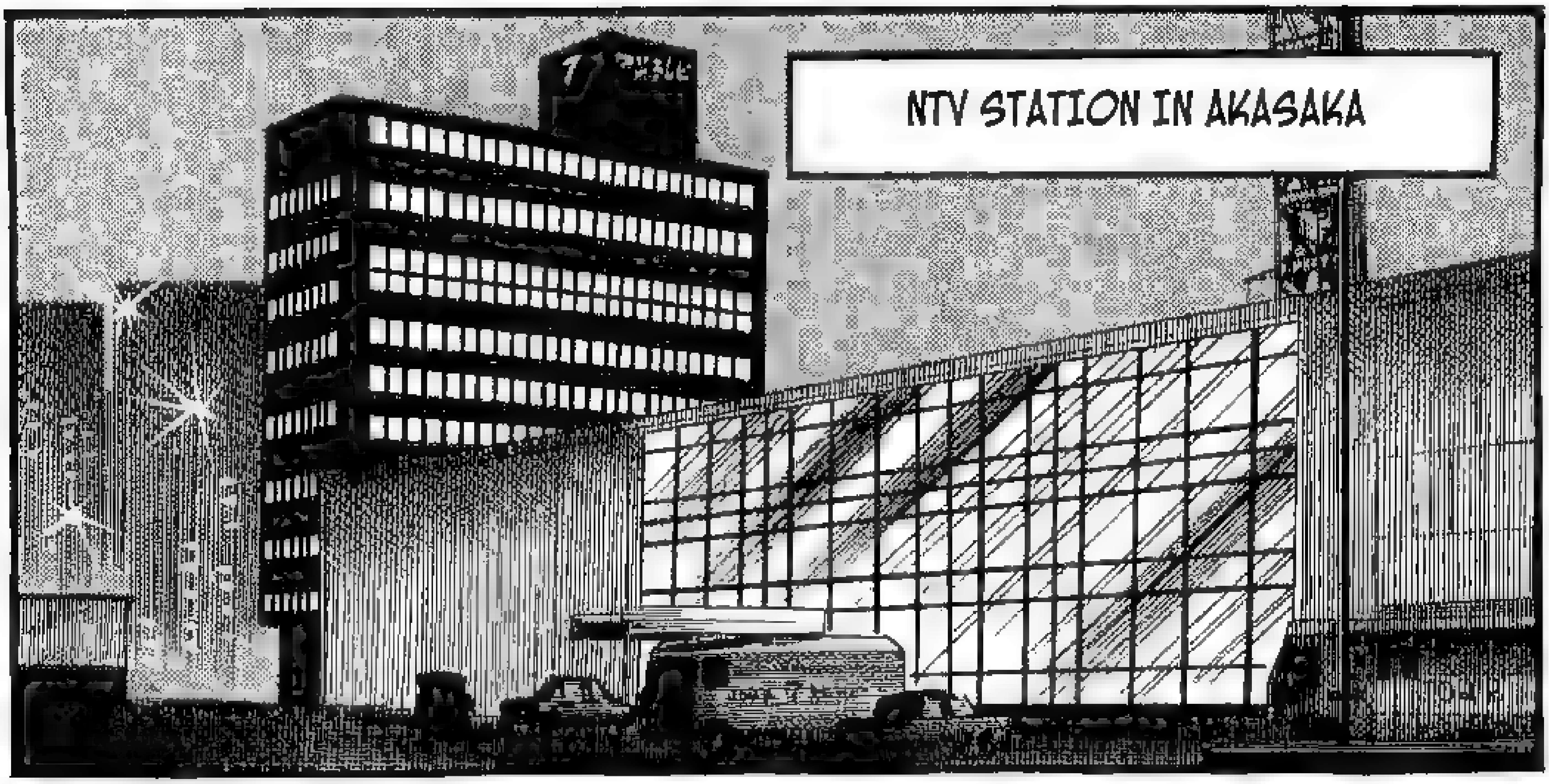

"SO IS THERE NO WAY TO CALM THE TIGER...?"
"NO, NOT AS LONG AS OZEKI MIKI LIVES."
"IT WOULD BE BETTER IF SHE DIES."
"BUT WHO HAS THE RIGHT TO DECIDE THAT?"
THE TSUKAHARA GROUP MAY DO IT FOR MANABE PRODUCTIONS...
THE YAKUZA WILL KILL MIKI...?
THEY PROBABLY WILL. WHAT WILL YOU DO, KOMORI?
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO... IS SEEING IT THROUGH ALL I CAN DO?
W-WHAT ARE MY SPIDER-POWERS GOOD FOR ANYWAY? CAN'T I EVEN SAVE A SINGLE WOMAN IN PAIN!?

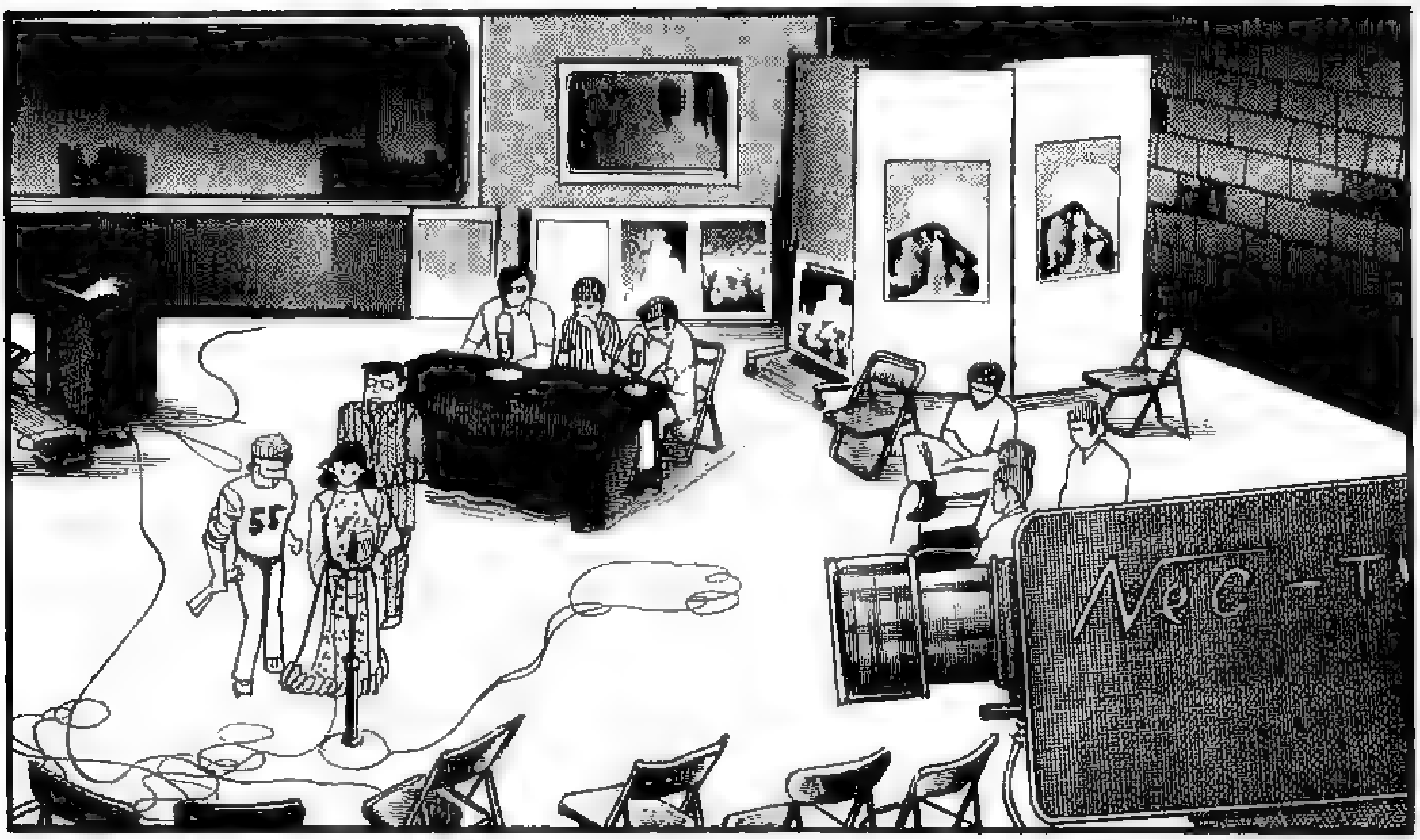

MIKI'S TIGER OF MALICE IS GOING TO WIPE OUT MANABE PRODUCTIONS! BUT THAT WON'T GIVE OZEKI MIKI ANY HOPE!
昭
オス

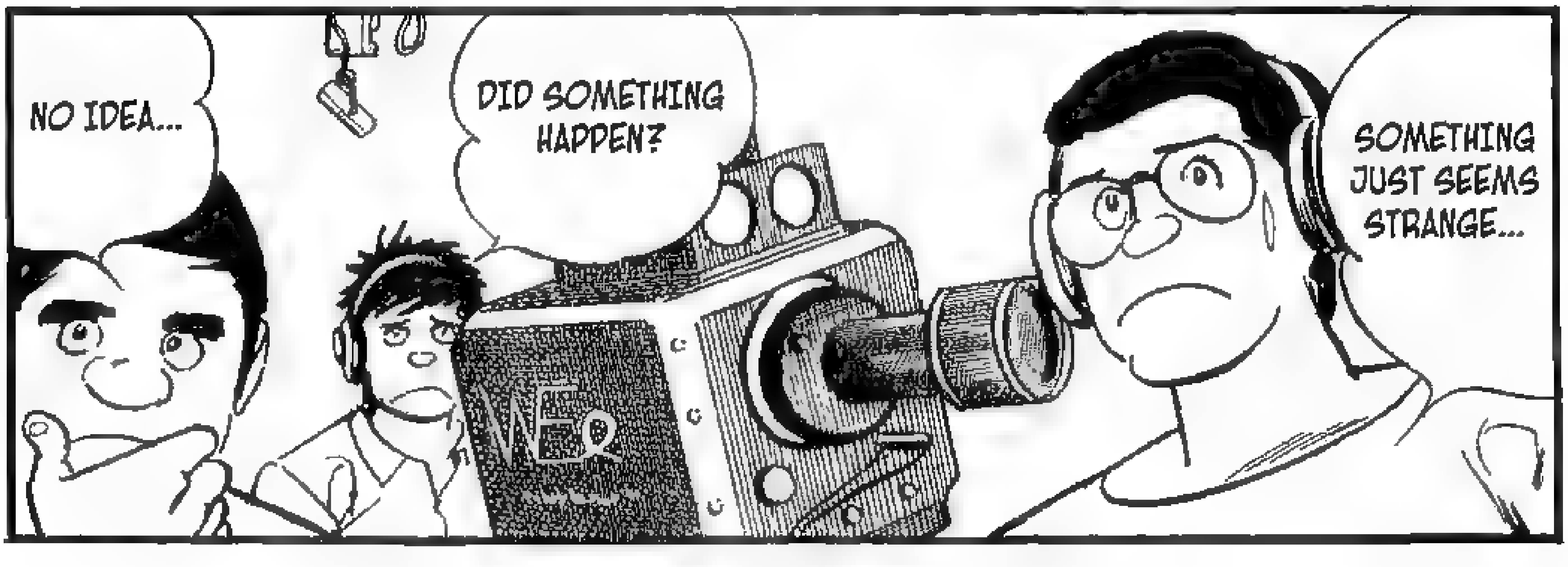


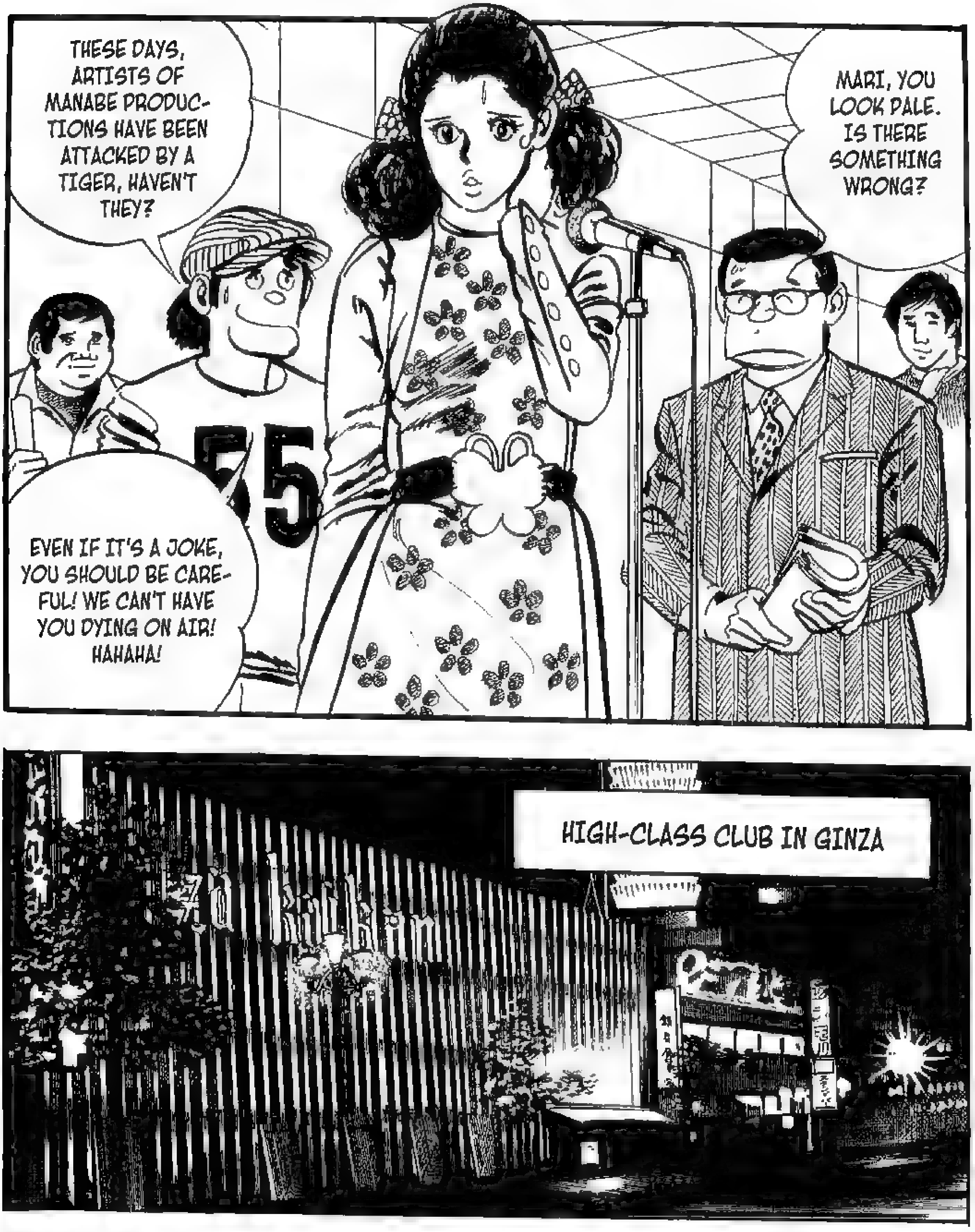

EVEN IF I SPEND A FEW YEARS ON THE INSIDE, I'LL BE A TSUKAHARA GROUP OFFICER WHEN I GET RELEASED...
塚
組
BUT IF I FAIL TO KILL THE WOMAN, I CAN NEVER COME BACK TO THE GROUP!
IT WOULD MEAN I'M DEFYING THE BOSS, AND I'LL BE LYNCHED! I'LL DIE IF I SCREW THIS UP!

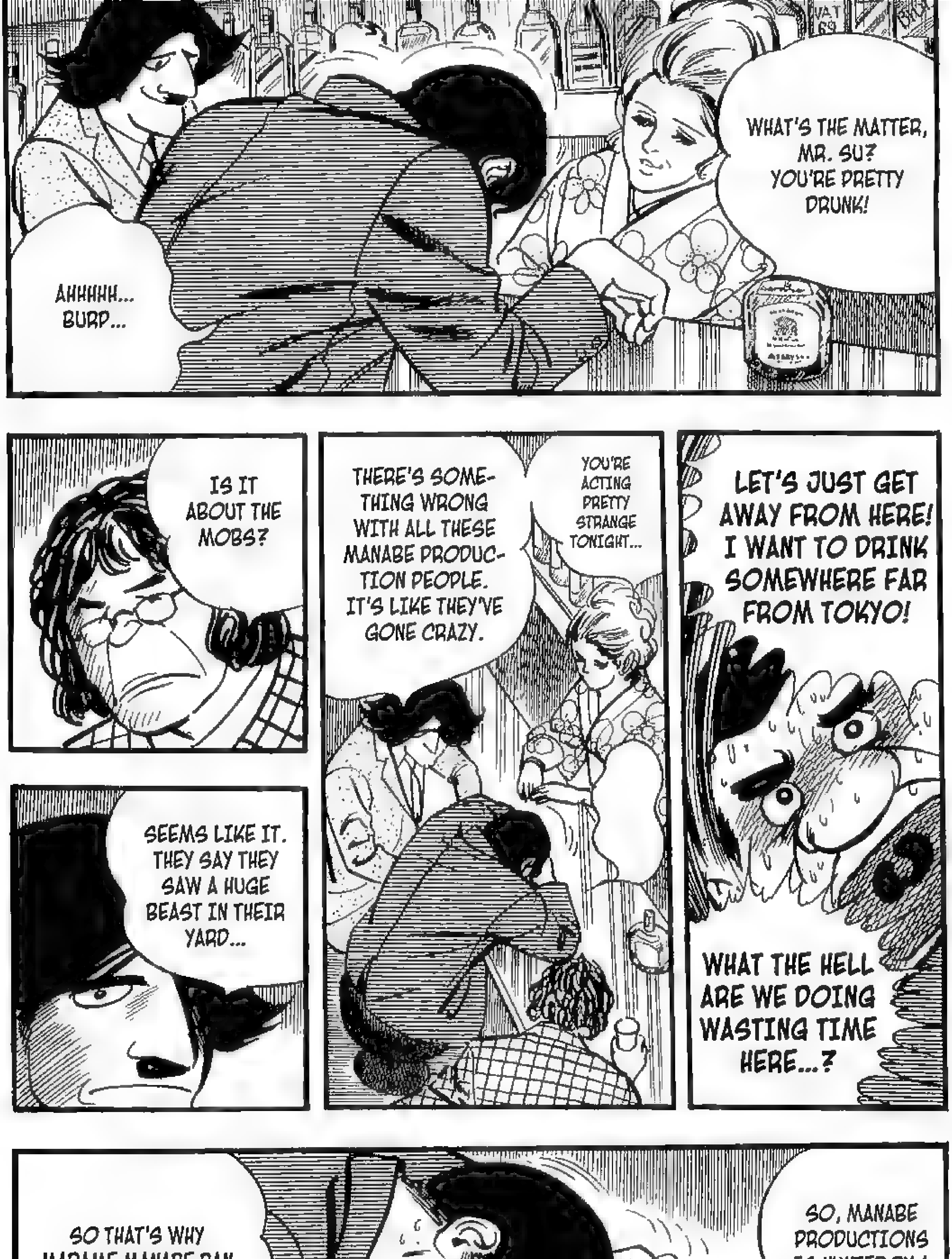
BACKGROUND: TSUKARAHARA GROUP

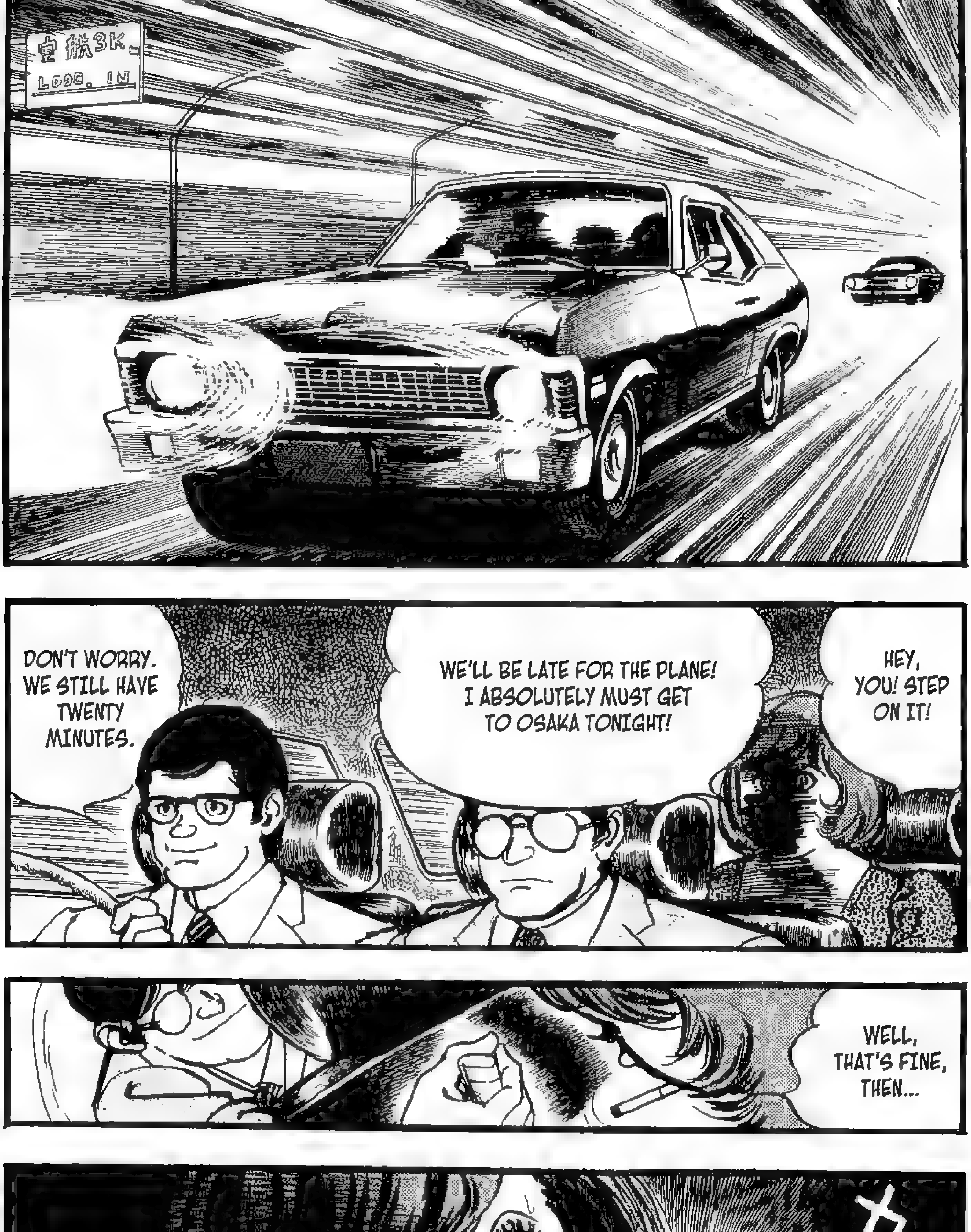

NTV STATION IN AKASAKA

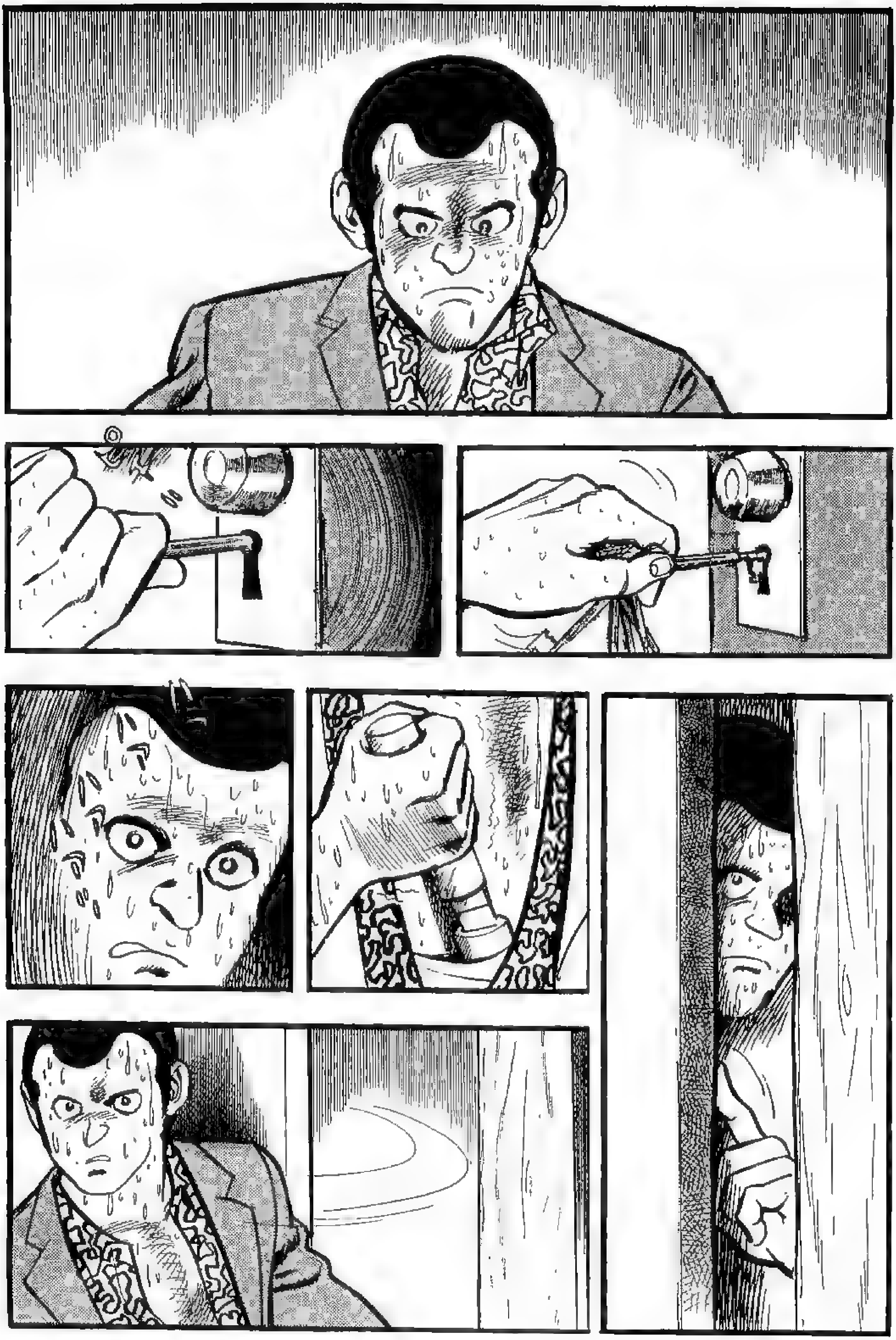

55
NeC-T

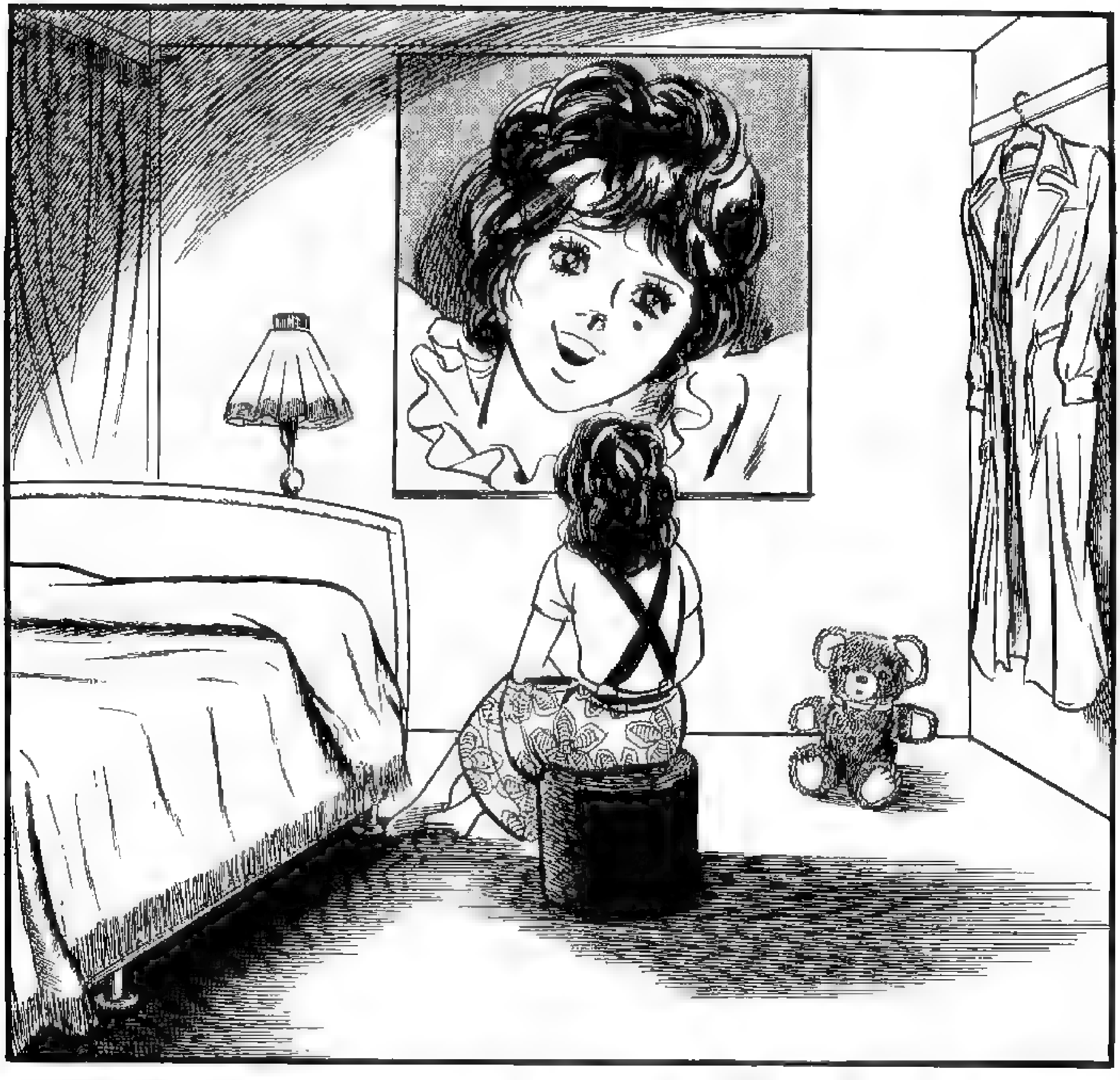

SOMETHING JUST SEEMS STRANGE...
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
NO IDEA...
NEC

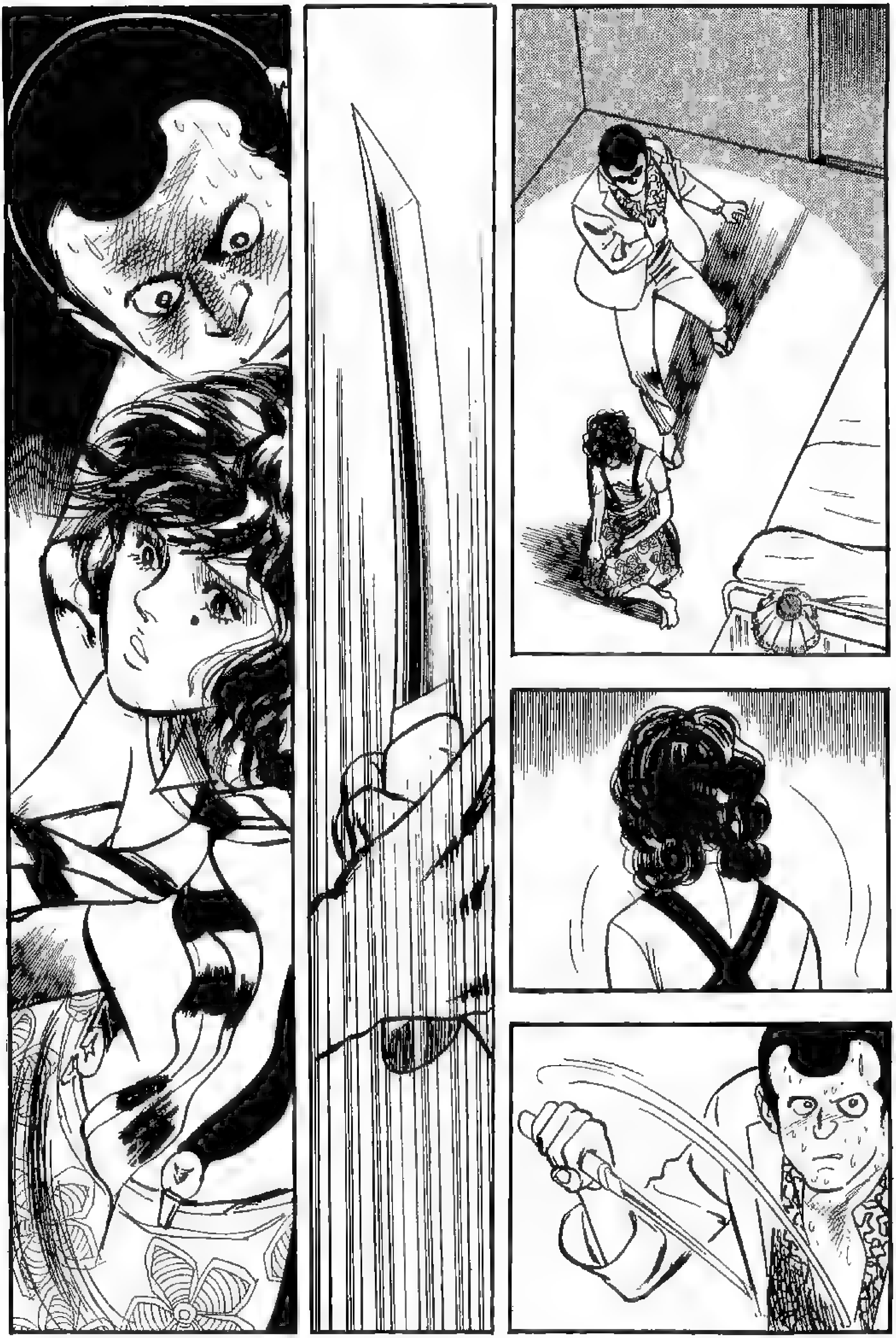

MARI, YOU LOOK PALE. IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG?
THESE DAYS, ARTISTS OF MANABE PRODUCTIONS HAVE BEEN ATTACKED BY A TIGER, HAVEN'T THEY?
EVEN IF IT'S A JOKE, YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL! WE CAN'T HAVE YOU DYING ON AIR! HAHAHA!
HIGH-CLASS CLUB IN GINZA

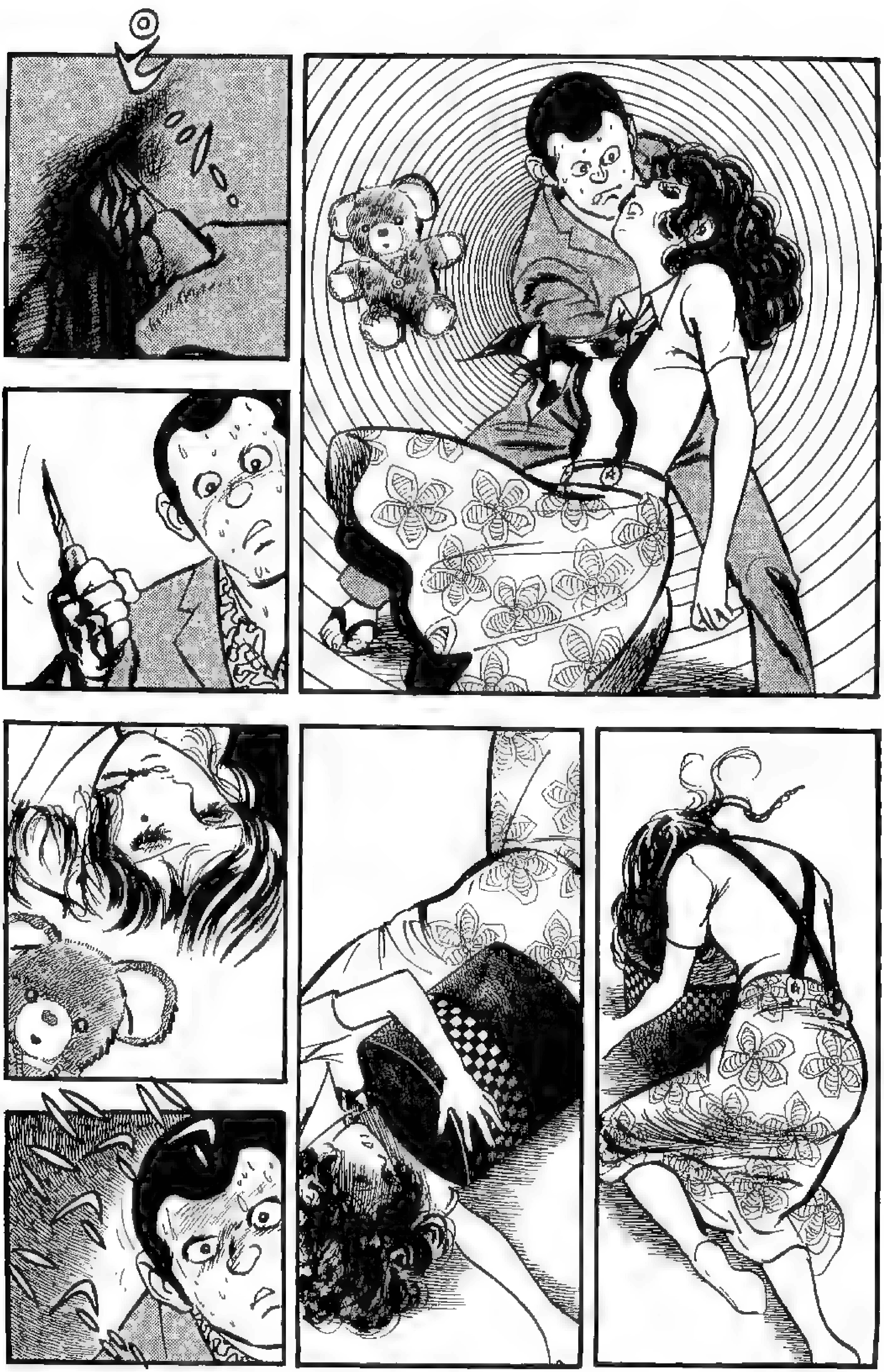

WHAT'S THE MATTER, MR. SU? YOU'RE PRETTY DRUNK!
AHHHHH... BURP...
LET'S JUST GET AWAY FROM HERE! I WANT TO DRINK SOMEWHERE FAR FROM TOKYO!
WHAT THE HELL ARE WE DOING WASTING TIME HERE...?
YOU'RE ACTING PRETTY STRANGE TONIGHT...
THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH ALL THESE MANABE PRODUCTION PEOPLE. IT'S LIKE THEY'VE GONE CRAZY.
IS IT ABOUT THE MOBS?
SEEMS LIKE IT. THEY SAY THEY SAW A HUGE BEAST IN THEIR YARD...
SO, MANABE PRODUCTIONS IS HUNTED BY A TIGER...
BURP...
SO THAT'S WHY MADAME MANABE RAN TO OSAKA AS SOON AS SHE COULD.

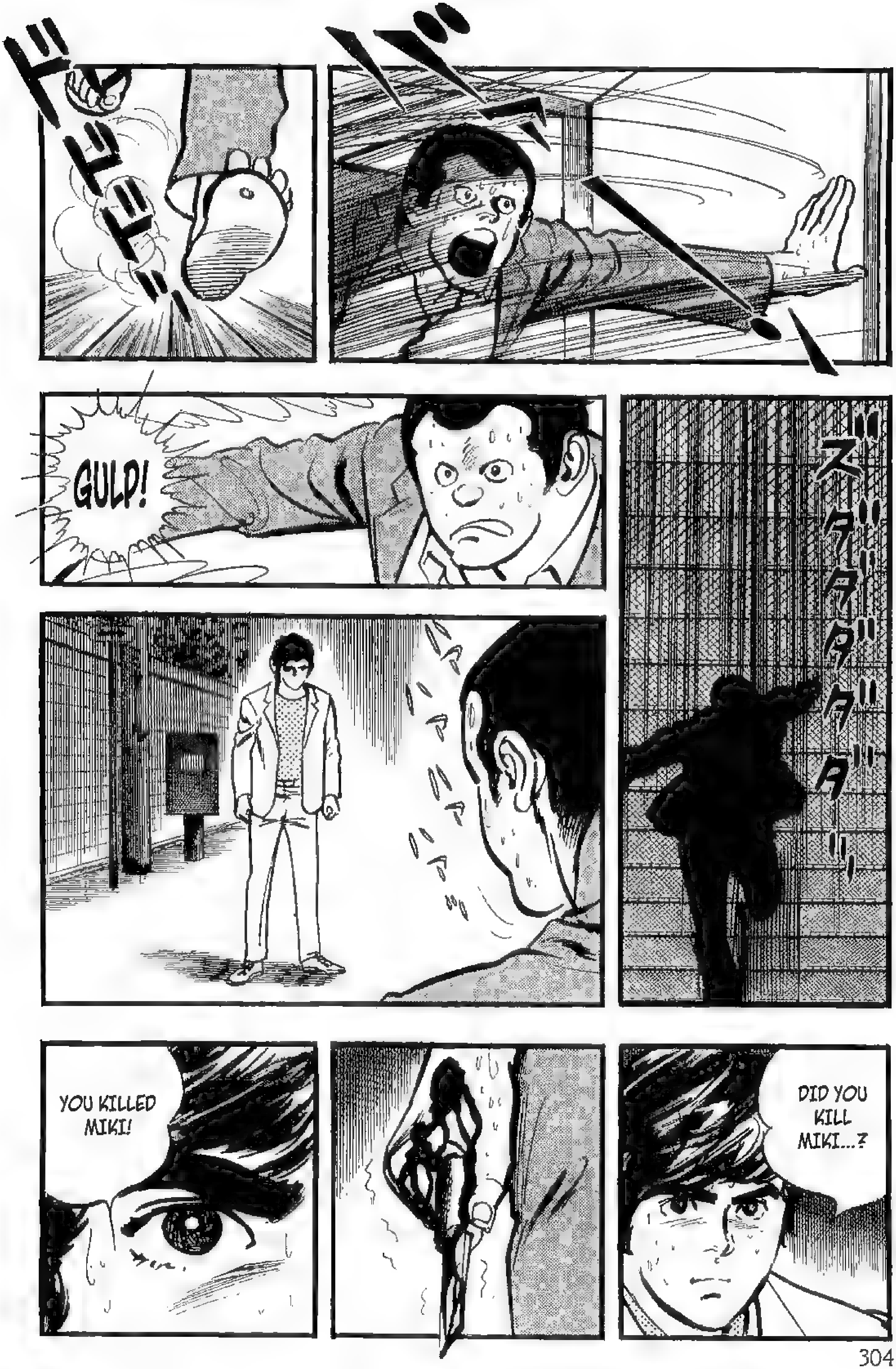

空港3K
LOOG. IN
HEY, YOU! STEP ON IT!
WE'LL BE LATE FOR THE PLANE! I ABSOLUTELY MUST GET TO OSAKA TONIGHT!
DON'T WORRY. WE STILL HAVE TWENTY MINUTES.
WELL, THAT'S FINE, THEN...
カチー

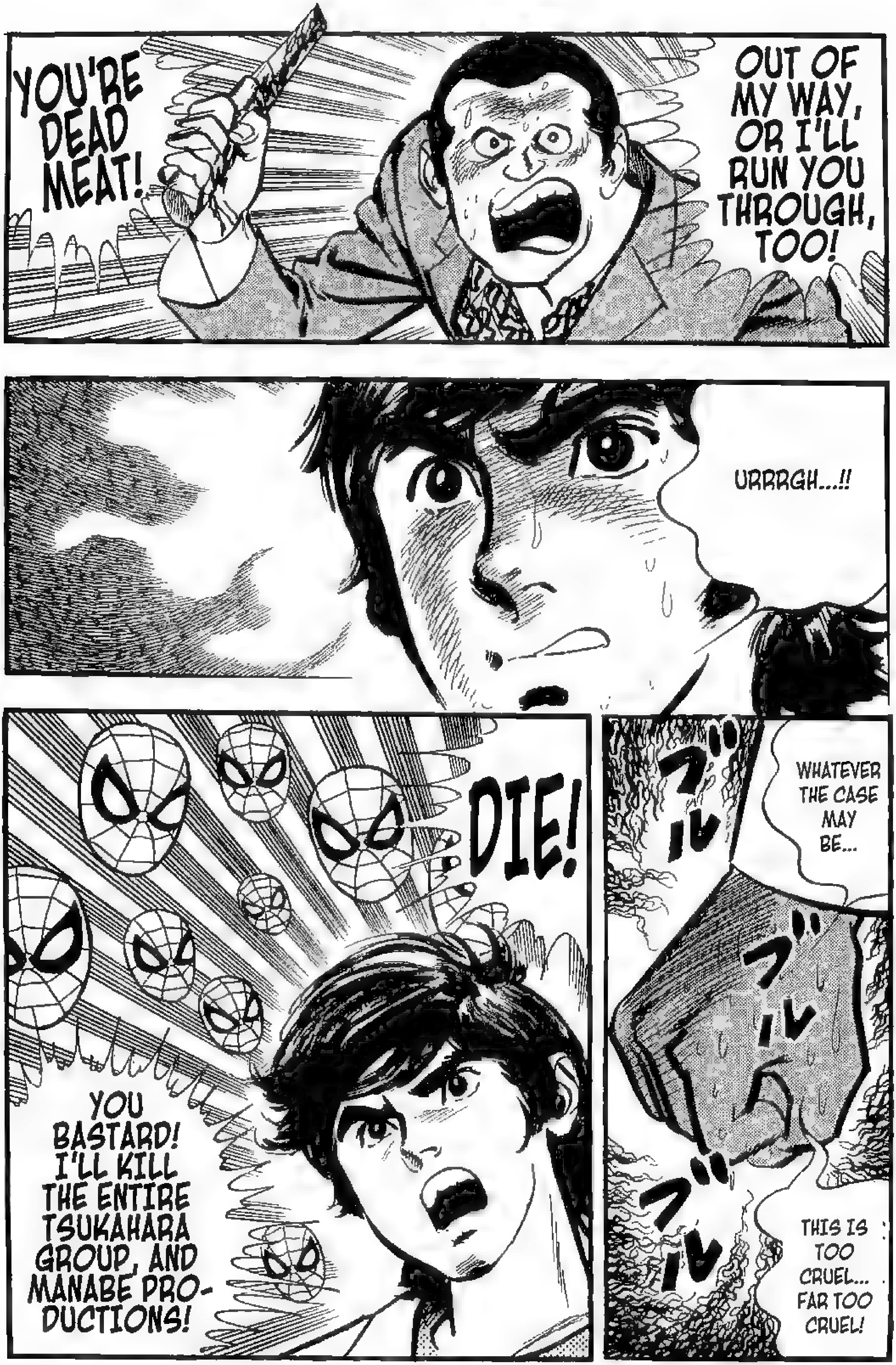


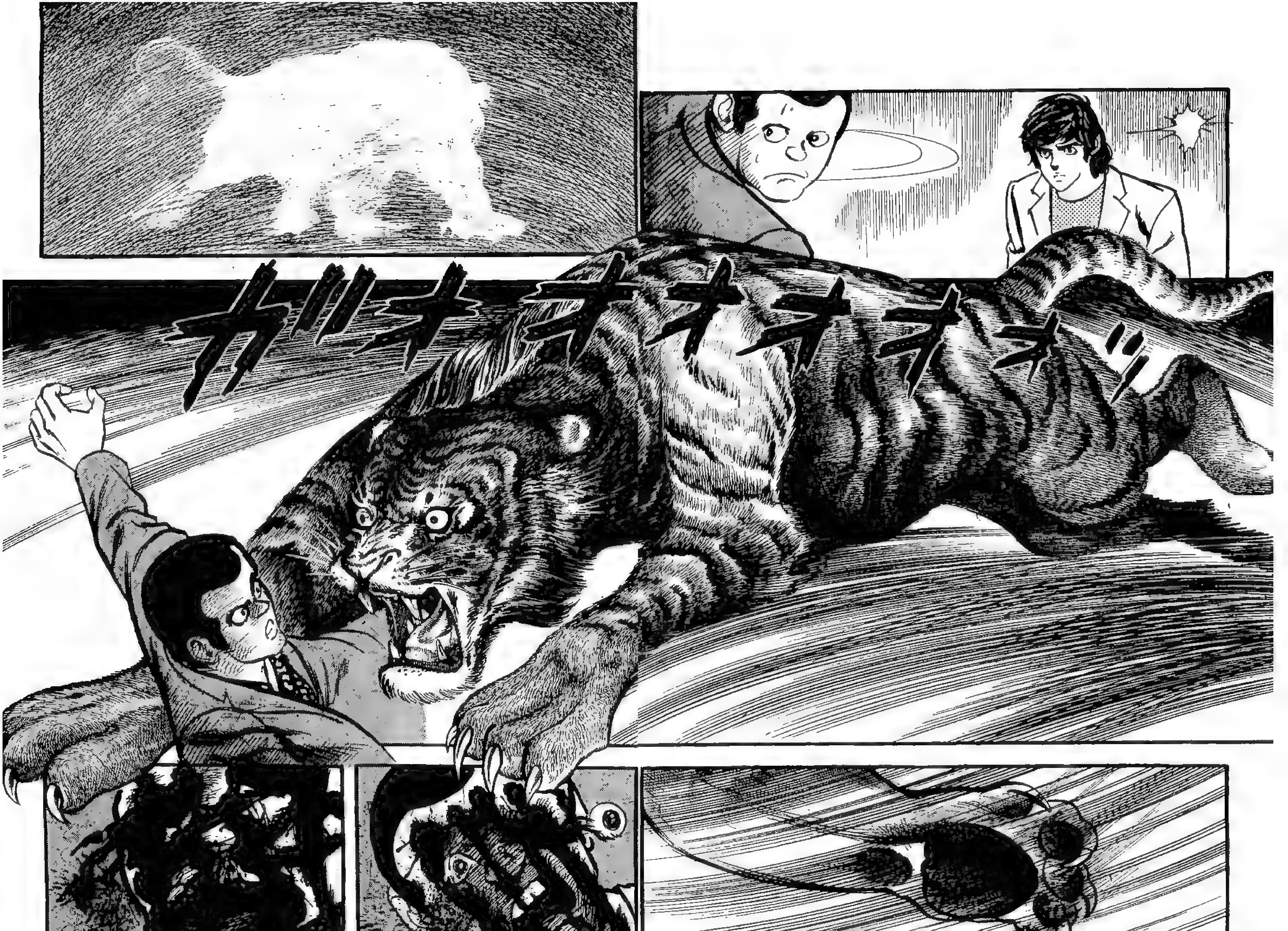


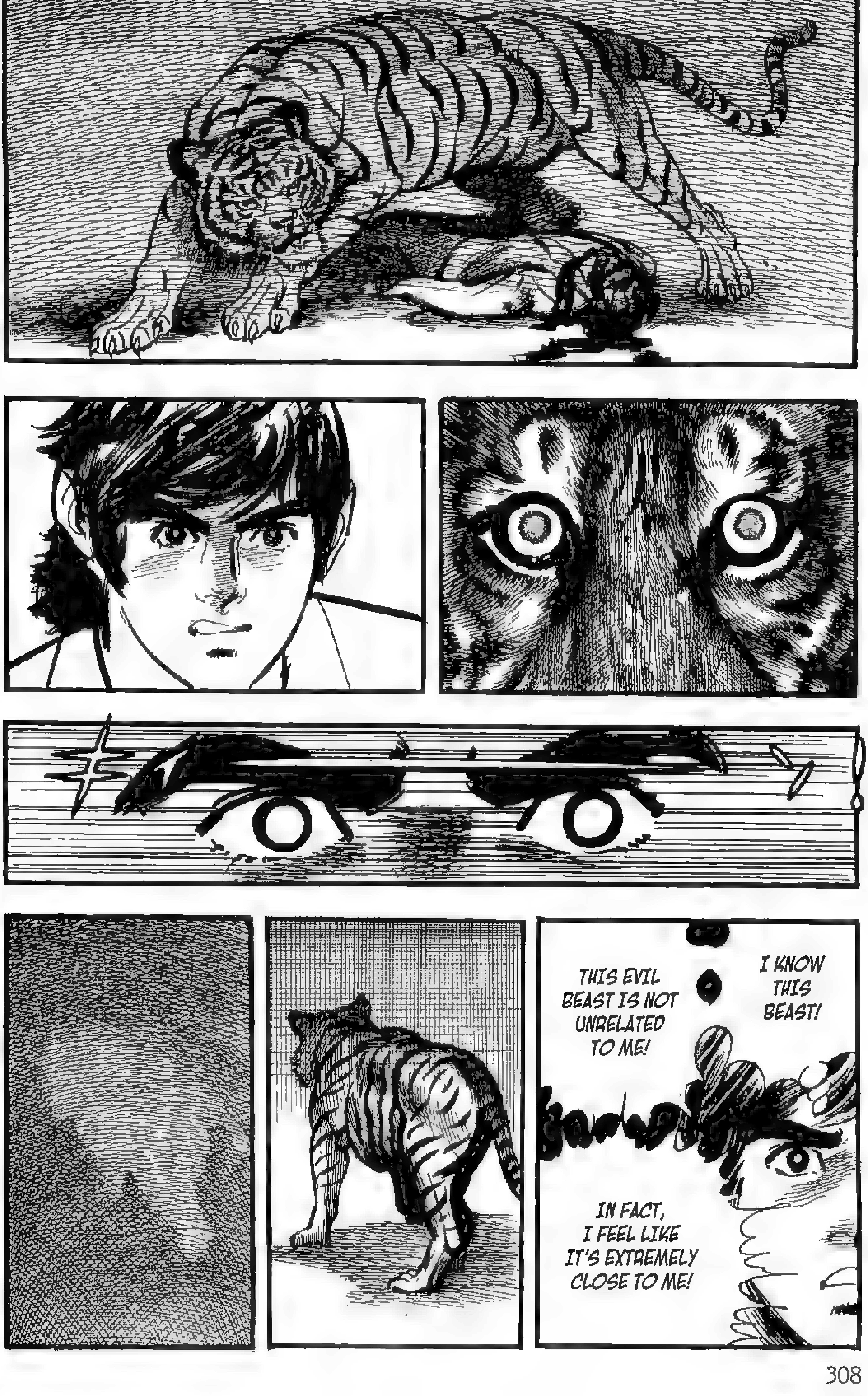


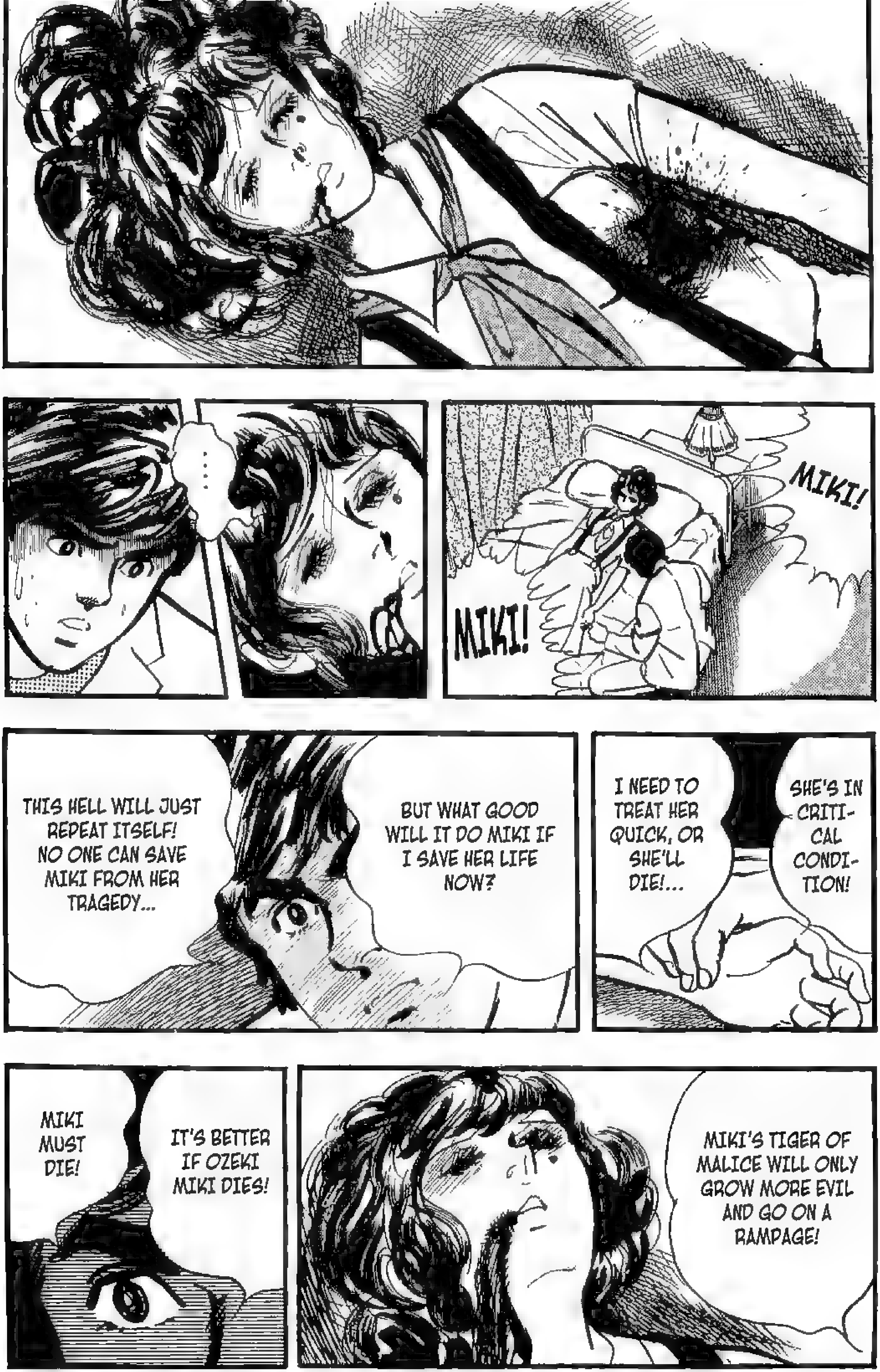


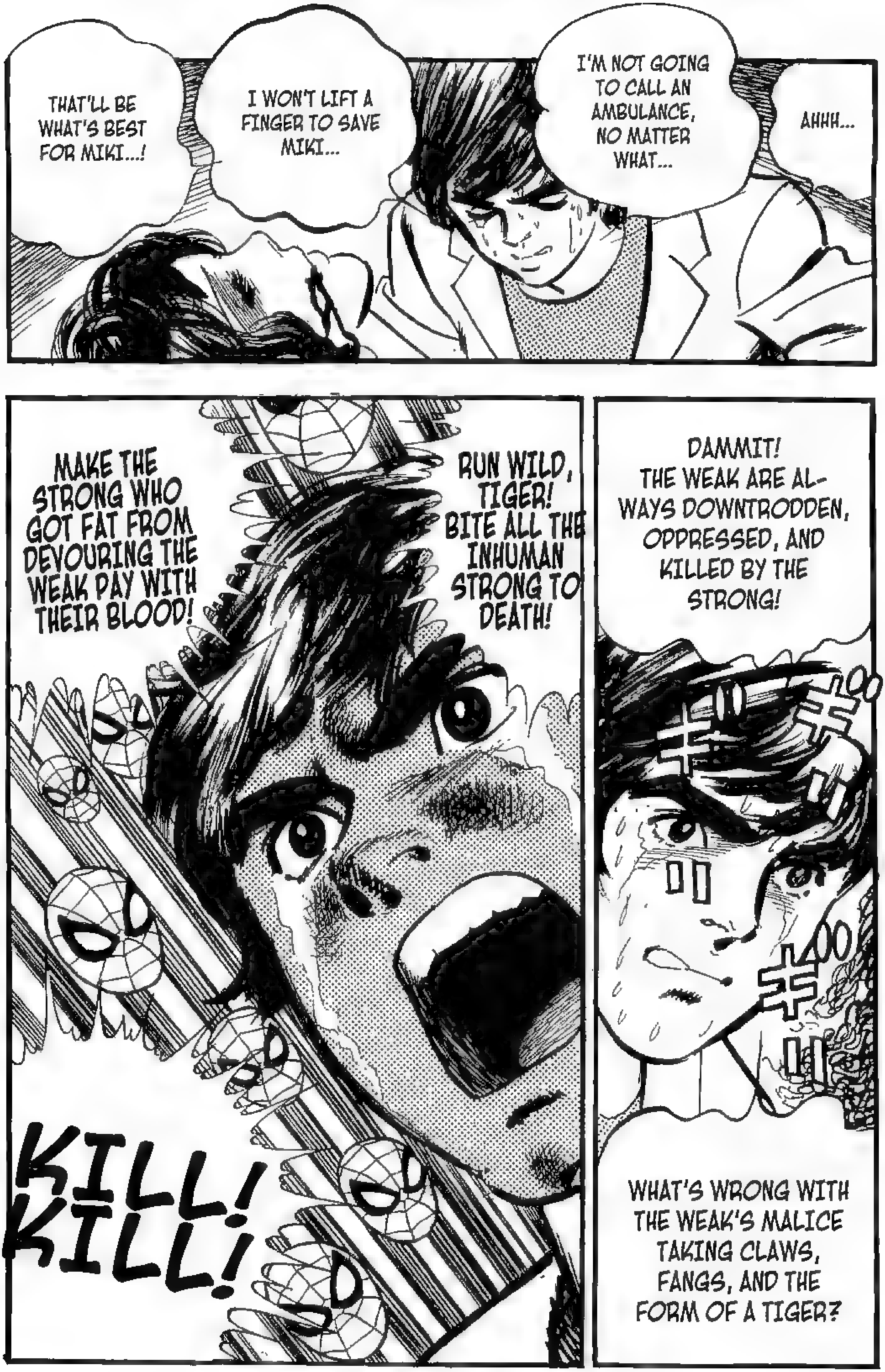

バッ
ドドドドッ
ズダダダダダ
GULP!
DID YOU KILL MIKI...?
YOU KILLED MIKI!

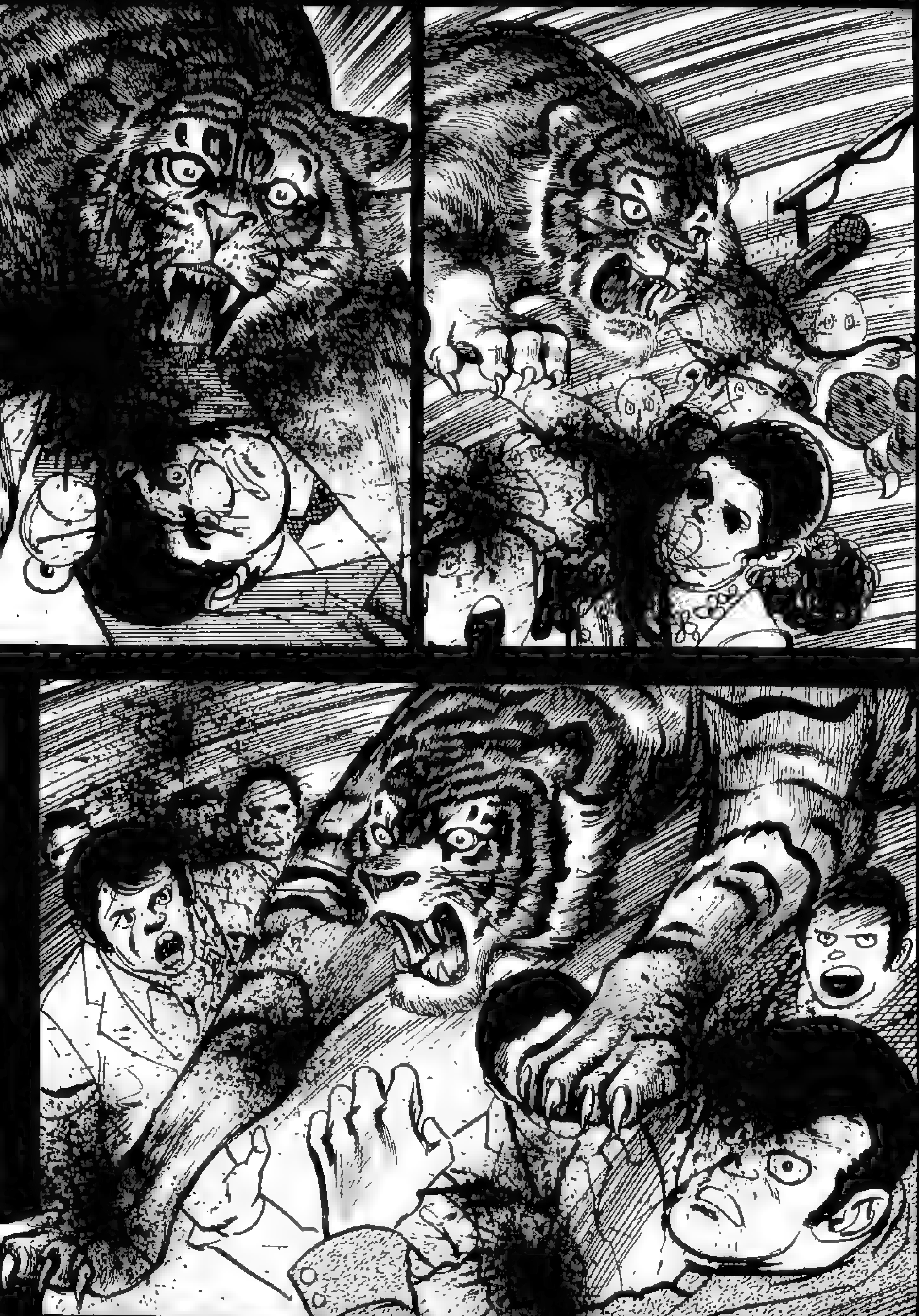

OUT OF MY WAY, OR I'LL RUN YOU THROUGH, TOO!
YOU'RE DEAD MEAT!
URRRGH...!!
WHATEVER THE CASE MAY BE...
ブル
ブル
ブル
THIS IS TOO CRUEL... FAR TOO CRUEL!
DIE!
YOU BASTARD! I'LL KILL THE ENTIRE TSUKAHARA GROUP, AND MANABE PRODUCTIONS!

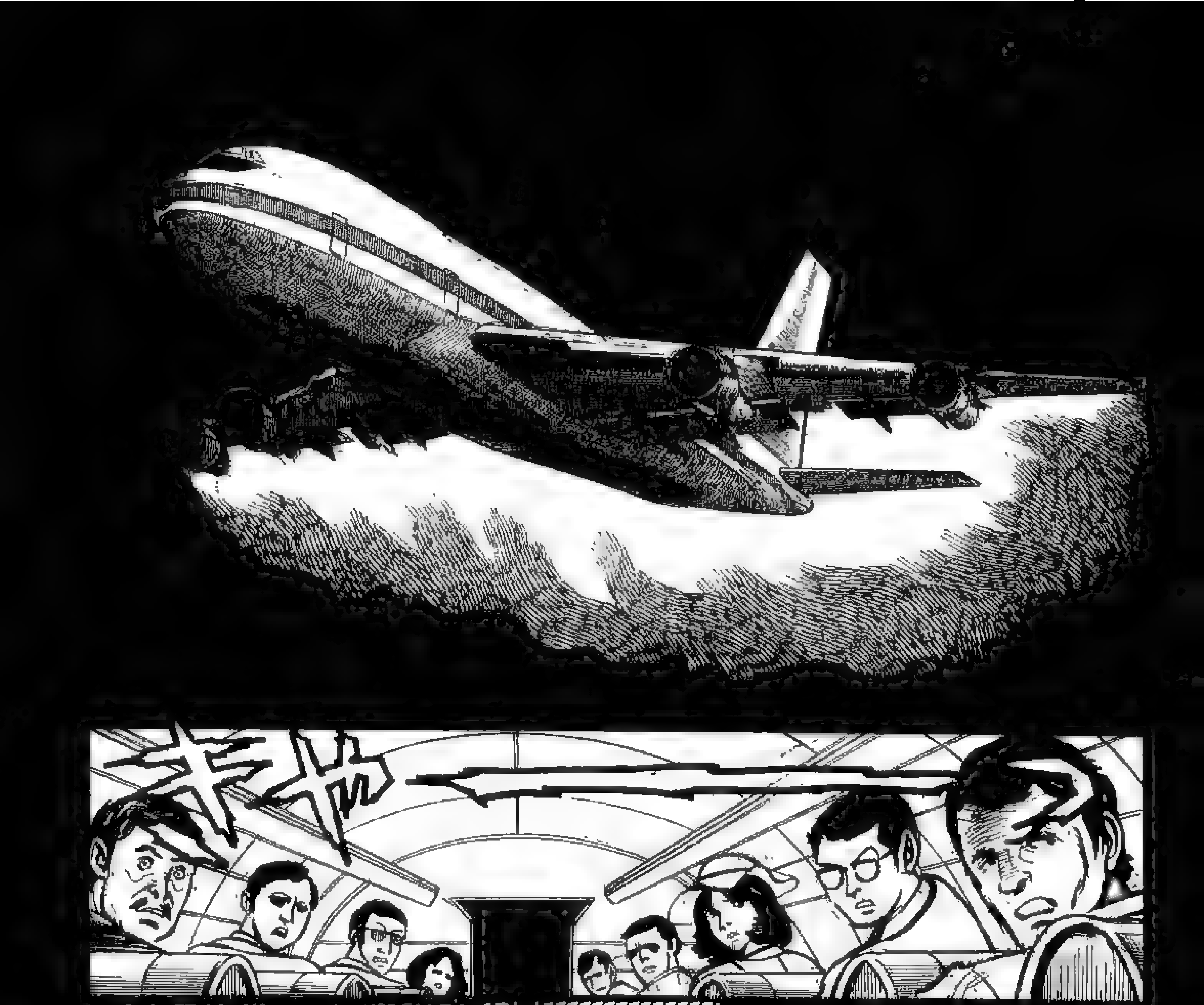

ガルオオオオオオッ


I KNOW THIS BEAST!
THIS EVIL BEAST IS NOT UNRELATED TO ME!
IN FACT, I FEEL LIKE IT'S EXTREMELY CLOSE TO ME!

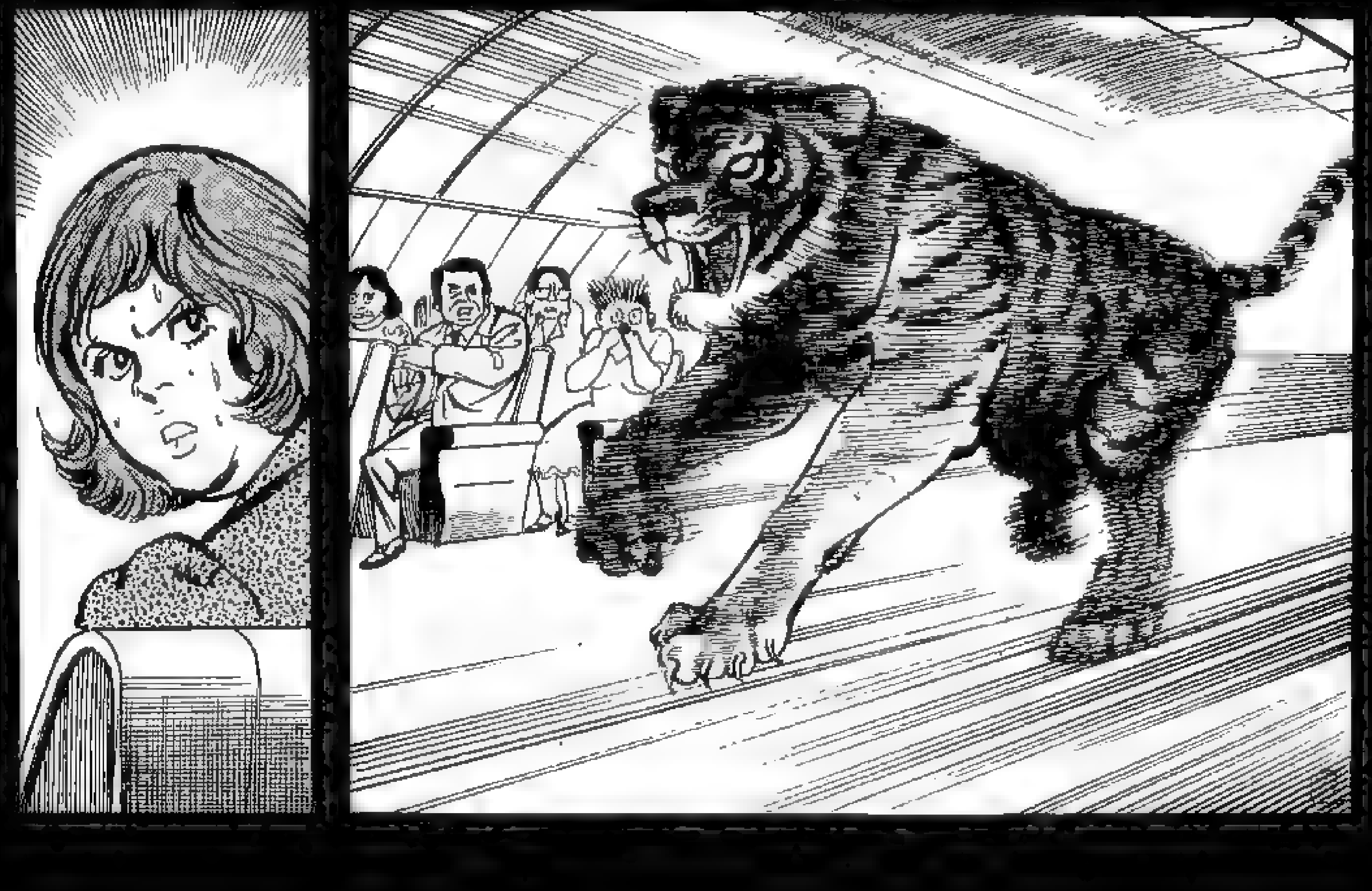

MIKI!
MIKI!
.....
SHE'S IN CRITICAL CONDITION!
I NEED TO TREAT HER QUICK, OR SHE'LL DIE!...
BUT WHAT GOOD WILL IT DO MIKI IF I SAVE HER LIFE NOW?
THIS HELL WILL JUST REPEAT ITSELF! NO ONE CAN SAVE MIKI FROM HER TRAGEDY...
MIKI'S TIGER OF MALICE WILL ONLY GROW MORE EVIL AND GO ON A RAMPAGE!
IT'S BETTER IF OZEKI MIKI DIES!
MIKI MUST DIE!

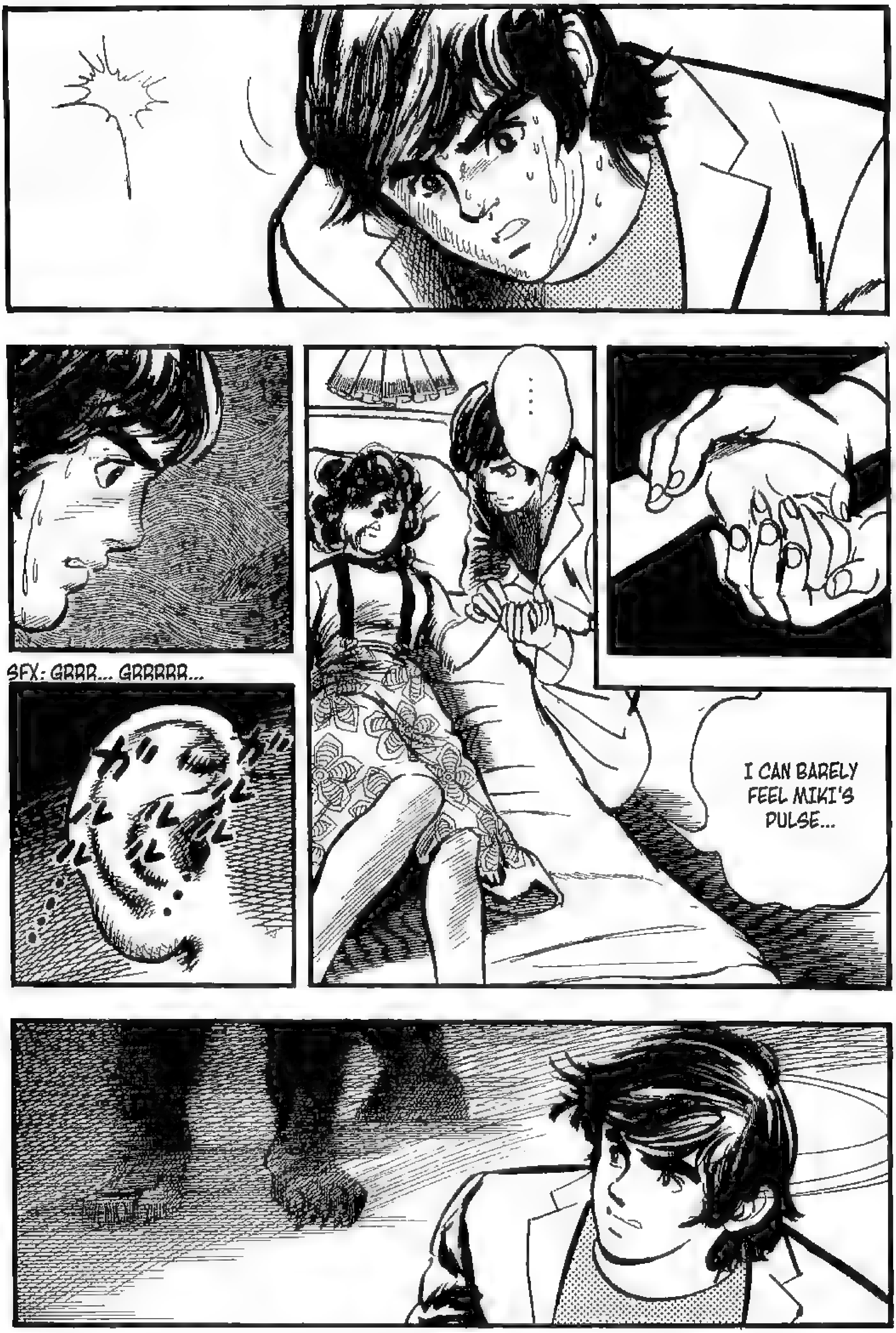

AHHH...
I'M NOT GOING TO CALL AN AMBULANCE, NO MATTER WHAT...
I WON'T LIFT A FINGER TO SAVE MIKI...
THAT'LL BE WHAT'S BEST FOR MIKI...!
DAMMIT! THE WEAK ARE ALWAYS DOWNTRODDEN, OPPRESSED, AND KILLED BY THE STRONG!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WEAK'S MALICE TAKING CLAWS, FANGS, AND THE FORM OF A TIGER?
RUN WILD, TIGER! BITE ALL THE INHUMAN STRONG TO DEATH!
MAKE THE STRONG WHO GOT FAT FROM DEVOURING THE WEAK PAY WITH THEIR BLOOD!
KILL! KILL!

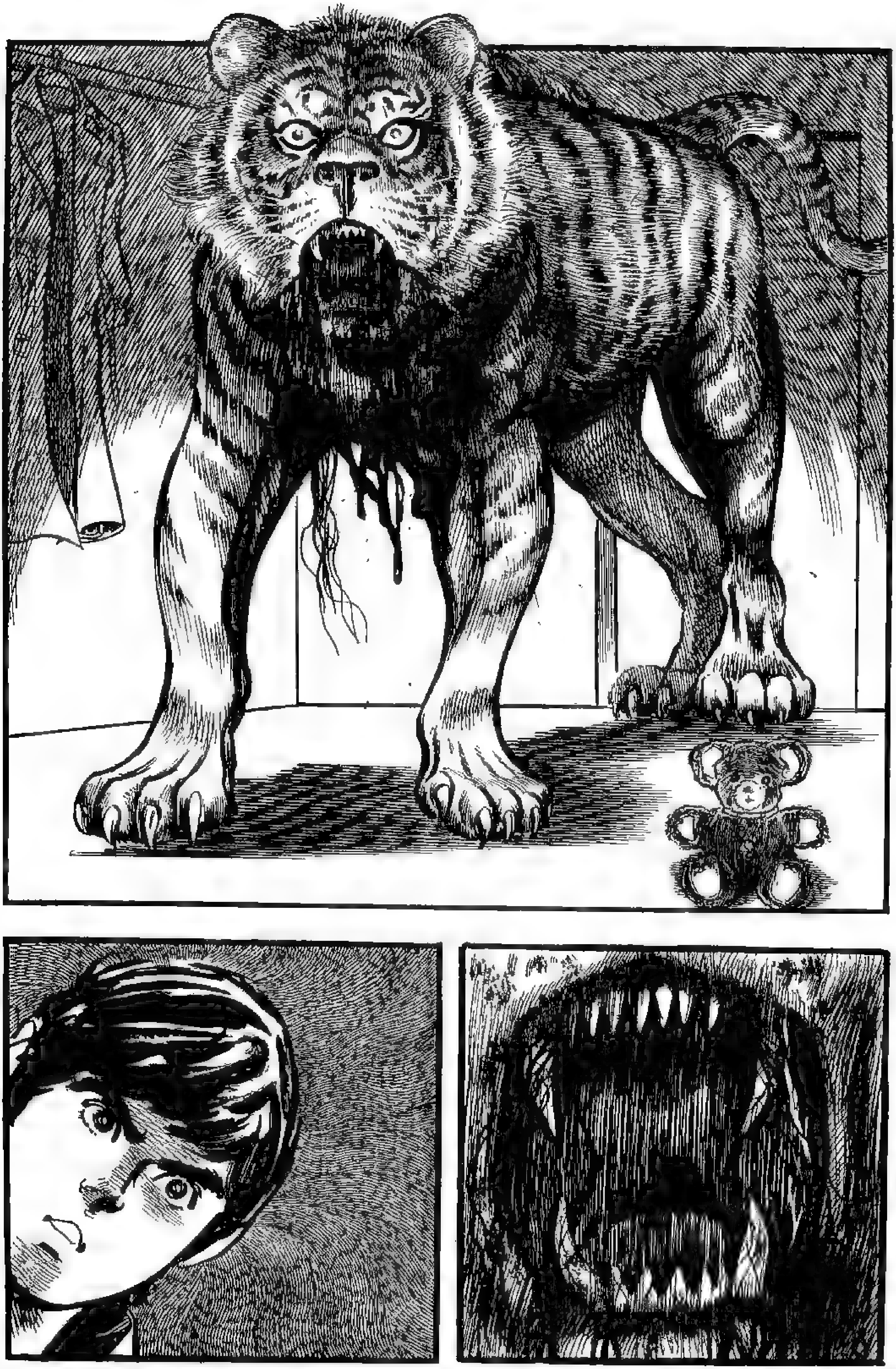


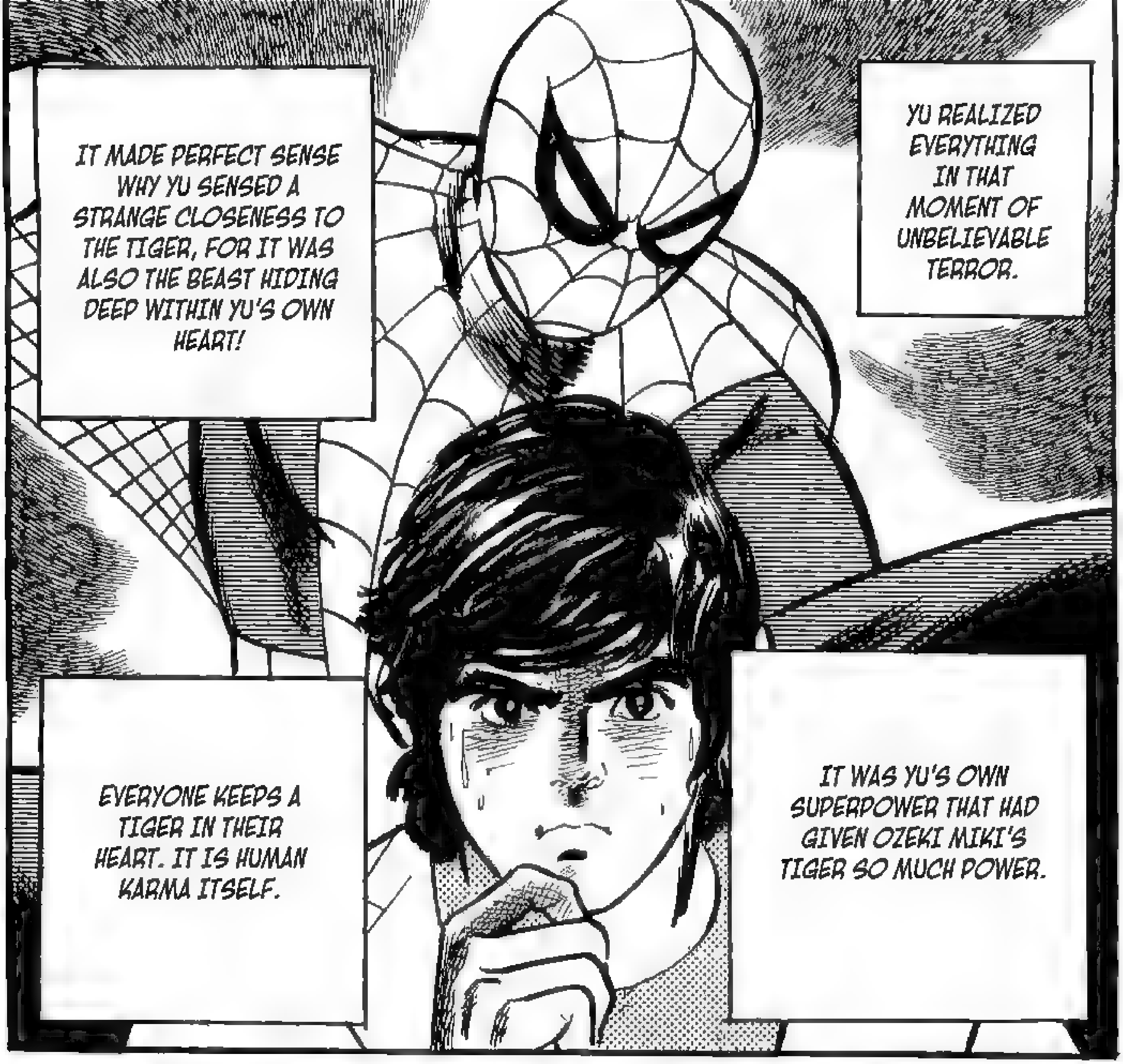


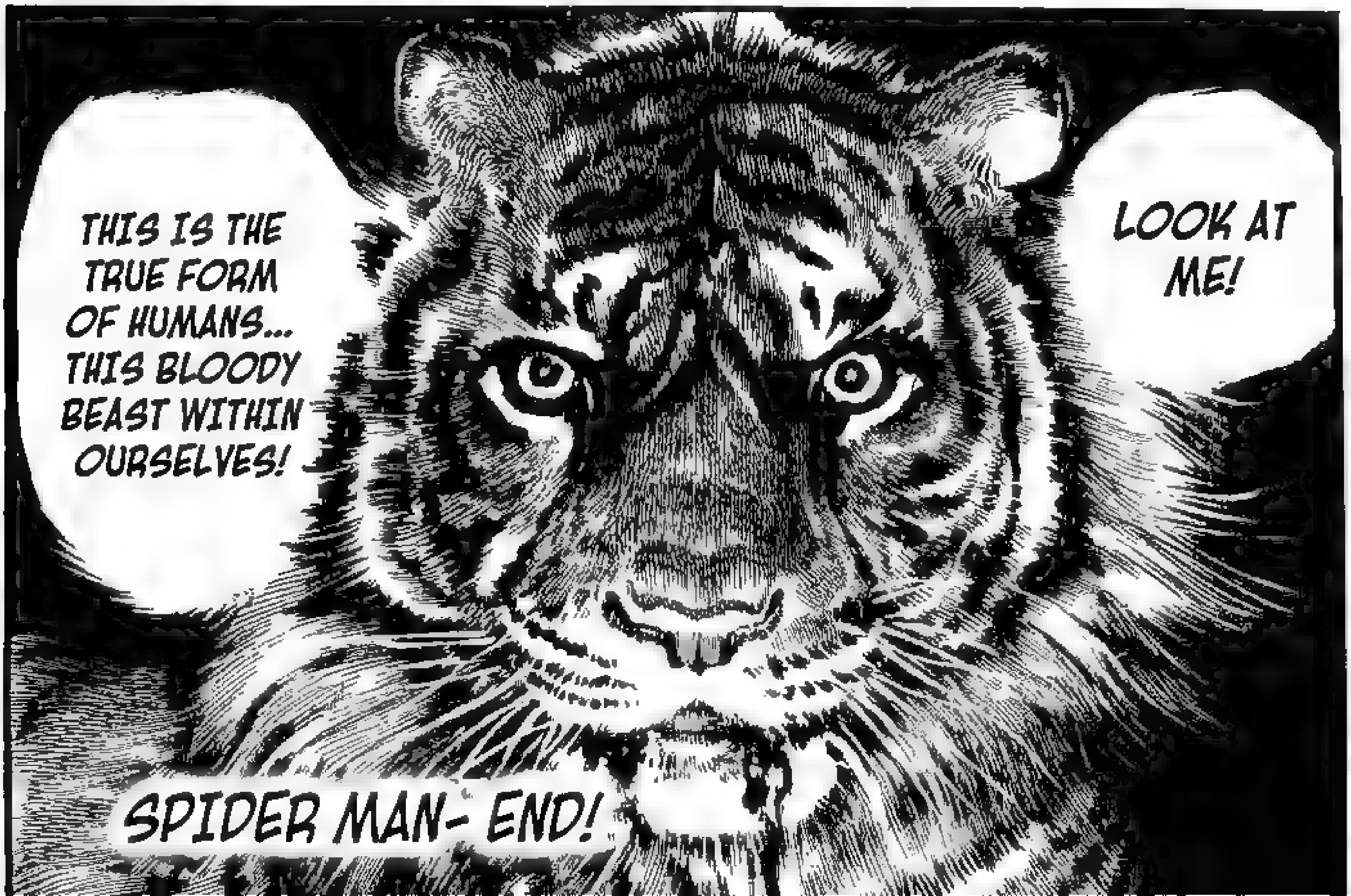
SFX: AIEEEEEEEEEEEEE!




....
I CAN BARELY FEEL MIKI'S PULSE...
SFX: GRRR... GRRRRR...




YU REALIZED EVERYTHING IN THAT MOMENT OF UNBELIEVABLE TERROR.
IT MADE PERFECT SENSE WHY YU SENSED A STRANGE CLOSENESS TO THE TIGER, FOR IT WAS ALSO THE BEAST HIDING DEEP WITHIN YU'S OWN HEART!
IT WAS YU'S OWN SUPERPOWER THAT HAD GIVEN OZEKI MIKI'S TIGER SO MUCH POWER.
EVERYONE KEEPS A TIGER IN THEIR HEART. IT IS HUMAN KARMA ITSELF.


LOOK AT ME!
THIS IS THE TRUE FORM OF HUMANS... THIS BLOODY BEAST WITHIN OURSELVES!
SPIDER MAN- END!

池上遼一氏インタビュー

『スパイダーマン』は先生の作品の中でも初期のものです。そこでまずは、先生のデビューからこの作品を手掛けられるまでの経緯をお伺いしたいのですが。

僕は福井県の中学を卒業してまずは大阪に出たんです。

——やはり漫画家を志してですか？

いや、福井にいるころはまだマンガは描いていませんでした。絵は好きだったので大阪の千日前にある看板屋で働いていたんです。お店の近くに『日の丸文庫』という貸本の出版社があってそこでちょっと描かせてもらったり、他の作家のアシスタントやったりしてるうちに『ガロ』に投稿した作品が水木しげる先生の目にとまり「アシスタントやらないか」と誘われたんです。もう看板屋には未練なかったから、すぐ上京しました。

先生のアシスタントを2年半くらいやったんですが、その間『ガロ』に何作か描いていて、それを見た少年画報社の方に依頼されて『少年キング』に何本か描き、やがて「SF作家の辻真先先生の原作で描いてみないか？」と言われて描いたのが『追跡者』で初めての連載作品でした。

そのうち講談社から声がかかり『週刊少年マガジン』に描くようになったんです。当時の『週刊少年マガジン』は読者年齢層を上げようと、文芸路線みたいなものを取っていて、僕も新田次郎の作品なんかを原作にして読み切りをいくつか描きました。そのころギャグ物も描いたけど自分には向かないなと思いましたね。その後、『スパイダーマン』の話が来たんです。

——『スパイダーマン』は編集部のほうから話があったわけですね。それ以前に先生はアメコミは読まれ

ていたのですか？

　アメコミのヒーロー物には興味がなかったです。その頃『ガロ』の作風に傾倒されてましたから。だから普通のヒーロー物ならまったく興味を示さなかっただろうけど、編集の人が「このヒーローは悩めるヒーローなんだ。『ガロ』でやっていた世界に近いナイーブなものを持った主人公で、エンターテイメントな作家には合わない。ぜひキミにやってもらいたいんだ」と言われて、それならやらせてもらいます、と決まったんです。

――おそらく他のアメコミヒーロー物なら受けなかったんですね。

　そうですね。悩めるヒーローと言うか、主人公が苦悩しながらヒーローになっていくということが、気に入ったんだと思います。

　最初は原作のアメコミを翻訳してもらいその通りに描いてましたが、話が単調なので僕のオリジナルでやっていいですかと頼み、オリジナルに切り替えたんです。

――先生のオリジナルはどの作品からですか？

　『にせスパイダーマン』からですね。何作か描いたんだけど、でも当時１回の掲載が１００ページもあったりして僕の能力ではとても持たなくてね、一度やめたんですよ。

　でもオリジナルにしてから人気があったので、原作を平井和正先生にお願いしようということになったんです。先生に引き受けてもらった最初の原作が『冬の女』かな。これが内容的に素晴らしいもので、人気も凄くよかった。

――たしかにゾクッと来るものがありますね。でも少年誌に『スパイダーマン』の内容は難しすぎるのではと感じたのですが？当時編集サイドから制約はなかったんですか？

　そうかもしれないね。ある種の読者には受けたけど、いわゆる一般受けはしなかったからね。でも特に編集からは何も言われなかったです。主人

公がオナニーするシーンなんかも、こんなの描いてもいいのかな？と思ったけど……。でも若者のリアルな悩みを描くなら性的なものも避けられないですしね。ホント自由にやらせてくれました。平井先生も僕の描いた作品を読んで、僕のニオイは残して、よりエンターテイメントに面白くして書いてくださいましたからね。

―『狂魔（くるま）』で主人公の恋人があっけなく死んでしまったのには驚きましたが。

やはり先生もいわゆるヒーロー然としたもの、主人公とヒロインがくっつくということに抵抗があったんじゃないかな。それと、平井先生の原作はシナリオ形式じゃなく、小説に近い形で書かれていて、適当に削ったり構成を替えたりしていいと言われてましたから、僕のほうで自由にやらせてもらっていました。今思っても楽しい仕事だったです。

――暴走族や学生運動、ベトナム戦争など社会批判的な要素も色濃いですよね。

あのころはフォークとか流行っていて反戦的な内容が多かったんですよ。僕なんかもボブ・ディランとか聞いてましたし。映画も『イージーライダー』とか『俺達に明日はない』といった反体制的で救いようのない映画が話題になっていた時代です。だから自然と、周りからそういったテーマが空気のように取り込まれていったんだね。長年やってて年取ってくるとだんだんテーマを探さなければならない、だけど若いうちは自分も不満を抱いている若者と同じ空気吸ってますから。

――社会に対する問題意識が強かったんですね。マスコミ批判や偽善、売名欲などといったものに敏感なのもその辺ですか？

まあ、僕はもともと『ガロ』に描いていたから、というわけではないですけど、反権力といった志向は強かったんですよ。だから反体制的というか、例えば殺人事件などが起こるとどっちかというと、

犯罪にいたる経緯などから犯人のほうに感情移入してしまうんです。屈折していたというか。当時永山則夫の連続殺人なんかがあったんですが、事件そのものよりも、そこに至るまでの犯人を取り巻く環境とか心理的なものに興味を持っていましたね。

そう、思い出した、ちょうど平井先生と打ち合わせしていたときにシージャック事件が起こって、犯人が警官に射殺されるシーンがテレビで放映されたんです。その印象を死ぬときは美しくありたいですねとか話していたら、平井先生は「池上さん、死とはそんなきれいなもんじゃないんだよ」と言われたなあ。あの頃の僕は、シージャック事件そのものよりも射殺された犯人に反権力みたいなものを感じて共感したりしたんだよね。とにかくそんな時代だった。そういったことで、スパイダーマンの弱者に対する思いが強いと言うか、守りたくても守り切れないというジレンマに悩む姿、つまり小森ユウの悩みはその当時、僕自身が持っていた悩みでもあったんです。当時はホント偽善とか欺瞞とか大人への不信感といったものを自分が持っていたから。そういうものが現れていたんだと思います。

——内容だけでなくコマ割とか絵の演出なども大胆なことをされていますよね。

そうですね、車が走るシーンを高速道路の矢印ばっかりで表現するとか、演出はけっこう楽しんでやらせてもらいました。こうやって通して見直すと実感しますね、この作品は僕が『ガロ』的な絵から一般的な絵へと試行錯誤しながら変えていった時期だったんだ。だから実験的なことをあれこれ試しているんですね。やはり若かったね。今はとてもこういう絵は描けないですよ。

——『スパイダーマン』を描く際にアメコミは参考にされたのですか。

やはり描くにあたって、アメコミを翻訳しても

らったものを何冊も借りて参考にしていましたから、そのうち僕自身だんだんアメコミが好きになり、自分でもスパイダーマン以外のアメコミを集めるようになったんです。特にニール・アダムズ（編集部注：『バットマン』や『スーパーマン』を主に手掛けた著名なクリエーター。ただし『スパイダーマン』は出版社が違うため基本的に手掛けてはいないはず）の絵の魅力に惹かれて影響を受けました。7、8年前かな、サンディエゴのコンベンションでお会いしてお話させていただきましたよ。

『スパイダーマン』でアメコミを勉強させてもらって、現在の絵のタッチが出来たのかもしれないね。特に『スパイダーマン』の後に連載した『I・餓男（アイウエオボーイ）』は外国が舞台だったから意識したね。タッチとかは真似してないんだけど、なんというか、空気だね。こう日差しの強さが日本とは違うんだよね。だからアメコミは陰影が濃いんですよ。だけど、そこまでやると日本人には受けないから僕の場合、小島剛夕さんの得意とするハーフトーンを入れながら、カッコよさだけをアメコミから戴いたんだね。

――そういう意味では『スパイダーマン』は先生の作品の中でもターニングポイントといえるのでは？

そうだね、そうかもしれない。こう画風が変容していくという点ではね。とにかく『スパイダーマン』は僕自身、色々学ぶことの出来た作品だったけど、周りの同業者からも評価が高かったみたいですね。つい先日も小学館漫画賞の授賞式で高橋留美子さんにお会いしたとき、彼女に「子供の頃『スパイダーマン』を読んで漫画家になろうと決心しました」と言われました。当時はある種のマイナー感があったかもしれないけど、だからこそ、今読んでも古くないのかもね。やはり若者の普遍的な部分の内面性を掘り下げていったからじゃないかな。たしかにこの作品は過去のものだけど、今でも生きている作品なんだなと実感しています。

スパイダーマン………………5

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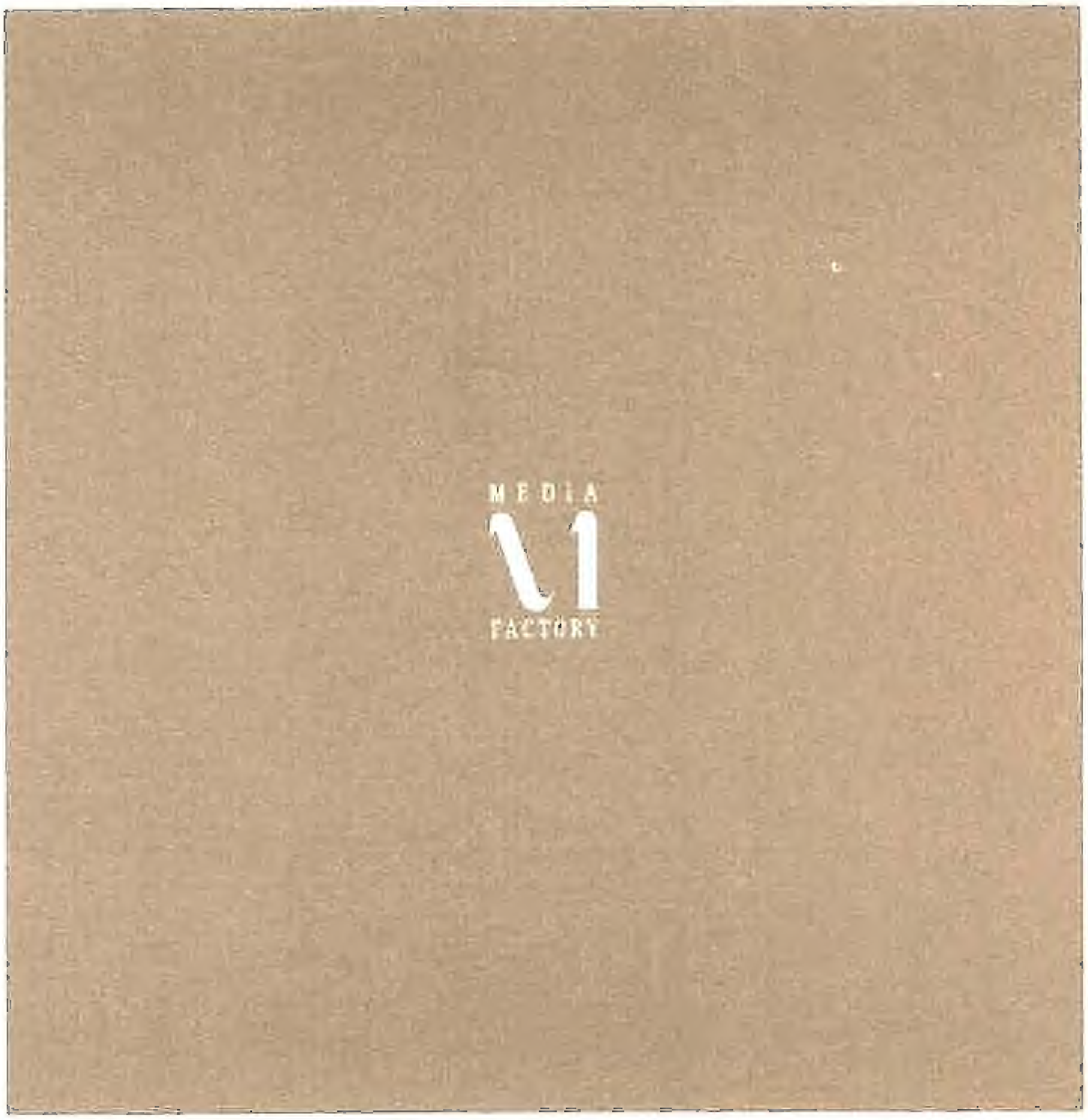
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